THE NATION'S HONOR ROLL FOR 1935

The Nation

Vol. CXLII, No. 3678 Founded 1865 Wednesday, January 1, 1936

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By Edwin A. Lahey

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By William T. Lucas

Italy: First Impressions

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JOHNSON CITY, TENNESSEE

The Nation

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THE DIVINE RIGHT of judges to annul the legislative will of the people has again been asserted. The present occasion is the labor troubles of a flour mill at Aurora, Kansas. Judge Merrill E. Otis, of the Federal District Court in Kansas City, has declared the Wagner-Connery Labor Disputes Act unconstitutional. The now familiar pattern of the judicial life-history of New Deal legislation is being retraced. A small-time Republican judge appointed in the palmy days of the Coolidge Administration rules that a carefully considered act to regulate labor relations, passed after six tragic years of depression, must be thrown on the dump heap. Judge Otis's decision is based on the narrowest possible construction of the commerce power of Congress—so narrow as to limit its scope finally to actual physical transportation across state lines. An entire sequence of Supreme Court precedents stretching back to John Marshall and construing the commerce clause broadly is completely ignored. The familiar bogy is again dragged out that if Congress may regulate collective bargaining in industries that are part of the flow of commerce, "then its power is almost unlimited," nothing remains of the sovereignty of the states, and tyranny is untrammeled.

JUDGE OTIS'S LANGUAGE stops little short of the vituperative. By the Wagner act, he declares, the worker "is dealt with as an incompetent. . . . He is the ward of the United States to be cared for by his guardian even as if he were a member of an uncivilized tribe of Indians or a recently emancipated slave." Thus in a generous burst of feeling the Judge lashes out against any act that would disturb the inalienable right of the worker to be denied collective bargaining and to be exploited to the hilt of economic circumstance. The real meaning of this decision becomes apparent when it is remembered that bourbon strategy is trying to short-circuit the Labor Relations Board and get a Wagner-act case to the Supreme Court under the most unfavorable conditions possible. This case does not involve, as does the Greyhound motor-bus case, for example, an appeal from a decision of the Labor Relations Board. On such an appeal the board's record, embodying an exhaustive investigation of the actual labor conditions at the plant, would go up to the Supreme Court. Since this is not true in the present case, the board would be well advised not to appeal from Judge Otis's decision, but to take its position on something like the Greyhound case.

THE BELATED ACTION of the Interstate Commerce Commission reducing train fares to two cents a mile illustrates one of the unsolved weaknesses of government control as against either competition or public ownership of utilities. If genuine competition could exist in this field, the railways would have reduced fares some years ago as a protection against the inroads of the buses. But largely because of the difficulty of raising rates once they have been lowered by the I. C. C., the Eastern railways have fought every attempt to cut basic fares during the depression—though they introduced special week-end rates in an effort to fill their empty trains. Under a system of state ownership, the rate-making bodies would be presumably not only more sensitive to public opinion but free from pressure from the railways themselves. Under the benign protection of the I. C. C. millions of dollars' worth of railway equipment has lain idle during the depression, and thousands of bondholders have suffered a serious shrinkage of their investments. While there may be some doubt that all the railroads will have a sufficient increase of traffic at two cents a mile to increase net revenues—after making allowances for the extra cost of carrying the additional passengers—there can be no doubt that the railways will once more be serving the ends for which they were intended.

THE RETURN of ex-President Calles to Mexico has precipitated a political crisis which threatens to become even more serious than that of last June. Fearing a coup d'état which would bring the former "iron man" back into power, President Cárdenas has taken swift and decisive action. Five senators, alleged supporters of Calles, have been re-

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moved and charged with treason. Charges have also been preferred against the reactionary Morones, former leader of the C. R. O. M.—at one time the most important labor organization in Mexico. The former President and his associates have been formally expelled from the National Revolutionary Party (P. N. R.). Despite a wave of popular protest against his return, Calles has given no indication of leaving, and speculation is active as to his possible backing. This speculation has been enhanced by the fact that Calles traveled to Honolulu in August on the same ship with Postmaster General Farley, and that they both registered at the same hotel. A large number of Mexicans are convinced that this indicates a definite agreement between the two in which Calles promised "industrial peace" and a more lenient attitude toward the Catholic church in return for the support of the Roosevelt Administration. In that case, of course, the President would not need to fear opposition next November from the Knights of Columbus, the Jesuits, and other militant Catholic organizations because of his "weak" Mexican policy. With the record of recent events in Cuba before us, no one can say that such things are impossible; we can only hope that the Administration has more sense than to drag our southern neighbor to the depths to which it has plunged Cuba.

THE NAVAL CONFERENCE has recessed over the holidays after two weeks of fruitless sessions which left the cause of naval disarmament farther from realization than ever. President Roosevelt's plan for a general 20 per cent reduction in naval tonnage was laughed out of court. Japan's plea for a "common upper limit" was definitely rejected. The compromise scheme proposed by the British delegation calling for unilateral declarations of each country's plans for naval construction for the next six years has met vigorous opposition from the Japanese and will probably be dropped. Even if adopted it would be of little value in checking the present naval race. Each country would doubtless place its requirements considerably above its actual building program so as to preserve a free hand. As yet the conference has shown no disposition to consider the naval problem as part of the larger problems of the Pacific with which it is intimately connected. Unless these broader issues are faced, the news from London is bound to be both monotonous and insignificant.

WE ARE GLAD to report that the government stood firm on its demand that the International Mercantile Marine let a contract for the construction of a cabin liner to replace the Leviathan. Had the contract not been let by December 16, the I. M. M. would have had to pay a forfeit of $1,000,000 for laying up the Leviathan—an arrangement that would have been greatly to the financial advantage of the I. M. M. The dead line was originally September 18, but Secretary of Commerce Roper, on the tenuous pretext of additional safety requirements for the new ship, extended it. The new cabin liner is to be built by the Newport News Shipbuilding and Drydock Company. It will be very much like the Washington and the Manhattan, and will cost $11,900,000, three-quarters of which will be a loan from the government. The original bid was for $11,600,000 (no explanation has been given for the subsequent increase), and Shipping Board officials said it was too high. The matter was taken to President Roosevelt, who had before him a report on the failure of the "big four" shipbuilding companies to bid on a previous advertisement for a somewhat larger vessel. Mr. Roosevelt was said to favor a proposal that the bid should be rejected and the vessel built in one of the navy yards unless the price was scaled down. If this was a bluff it failed to work. The government was in a dilemma, for after the questionable postponement of the September 18 dead line Secretary Roper had gone on record that the contract must and should be let by December 16 or the $1,000,000 would be forfeited. For paying the shipbuilders' price Roper and the I. M. M. have only themselves to blame: it was they who broke the original contract—favorable enough to the I. M. M.—stipulating that the Leviathan should continue in service during 1935 and 1936.

THE STRANGEST ASPECT of the Strange Case of Lamar Hardy is the failure of the metropolitan Republican press to seize upon this New Deal misstep for a well-merited attack on the Administration. The President has appointed this man United States Attorney for the financial heart of the country, and no protest is raised. An opposition paper, such as the New York *Herald Tribune,* could show a very close link between Democratic politics and the State Title and Mortgage Company. It could show that Mr. Hardy won his appointment through the help of Boss Edward J. Flynn of the Bronx, and that Mr. Flynn's firm was counsel for the company. It could show that Mr. Hardy is being sued, with two dozen other former directors, for $5,000,000 by the state Insurance Department, and that his effort to compromise this suit by paying $16,500 failed when Justice Frankenthaler threw the compromise out, the Justice reminding the Insurance Department that it had itself said it had good ground for action, on charges of malfeasance and nonfeasance in making loans to affiliates. It could show that others, party to the same suit and tarred with the same State Title brush, have been accorded high honors by the New Deal: that the Democratic politician James J. Hoey, sued along with Mr. Hardy, is now the New Deal's Collector of Internal Revenue; that Julian M. Gerard, another director, is the New Deal's Regional Administrator for the Federal Housing Administration. The federal government is criminally prosecuting former associates of Mr. Hardy at the moment Mr. Hardy becomes federal prosecutor. A fight in the Senate against Mr. Hardy's confirmation is vitally necessary. But the *Herald Tribune* and the Hearst press, much as they hate the Administration, have kept quiet. In the higher reaches of finance all men are brothers.

FOUNDATIONS have often been cited as proof of the value of a system wherein a few men are able to acquire great wealth. Without the large grants made possible by private fortunes it would be impossible, it is argued, adequately to endow philanthropic and scientific enterprises which offer no direct advantages either to the politicians or to business itself. The foundations offer that security which is essential to disinterested endeavor—social or scientific. In the light of this theory, it is interesting to consider the expenditures of the leading foundations in the United States during the depression years. Here was a great crisis, calling for dispassionate research; a time when, if ever, there was need for direct assistance in the field of social welfare, economic study, and education. Yet, according to a recent study

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prepared by the Twentieth Century Fund, the total grants of the sixty-eight leading foundations between 1930 and 1934 declined 53 per cent, although their assets suffered practically no shrinkage. The cut was largely due to a decrease in income from securities, but in some instances the foundations report "a readjustment in finances in the interest of maintaining a satisfactory balance in the investment portfolio." Despite the crisis, the grants for economic studies, while double those of 1930, rank seventh on the list, and were less than one-eighth of the amount set aside for education or for public health. Social welfare ranked third, but showed a decline from 1930, while birth control, ranking twenty-first, received the munificent amount of $1,250 in 1934, a decline of 75 per cent from 1930. At that, however, it was one notch ahead of civil liberties, which received only $1,211 and had dropped 92 per cent in four years. The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace curtailed its grants by 73 per cent, on the supposition, we imagine, that its work is nearly completed.

THE SMOKE of a good deal of criticism has come out of subjecting teachers in both state and private institutions to the teachers' oath of loyalty. For a while it looked as if Professor Mather of Harvard would offer a real protest, but lacking the active support of his president or any other member of the faculty, he finally signed the oath, first with reservations and then without. Real fire on the subject, however, has been struck from Tufts College in Boston. Professor Arthur Lane of the Geology Department and Professor Earle M. Winslow, head of the Department of Economics, have resigned rather than sign the oath, in the belief that to do so would mean jurisdiction by the legislature over all teaching, private as well as public. Professor Winslow, at a legislative hearing on the bill, declared that enforced patriotism was a joke, and that "even a scoundrel would take an oath." Thousands of teachers have undeniably taken the oath with tongue in cheek, not because they had any intention of defying the Constitution, but because they believed their patriotism beyond the sort of legislative meddling which the oath implies. To demand that they have the courage of their convictions and refuse to conform, even though it might mean the loss of their jobs, is perhaps impossible in a time of economic insecurity like the present. But one may be thoroughly grateful when two men, distinguished in their professions, refuse to do what so many have done unwillingly.

IT IS REPORTED by the Pittsburgh *Post Gazette* that the American Association of University Professors will place the University of Pittsburgh on its black list when it meets late in December. If this action is taken, it will be an even sterner challenge to the forces of reaction in education. Blacklisting a university means that none of the 10,000 members of the A. A. U. P. may take a teaching position there without forfeiting his membership in the association. Two investigating committees have established the fact that lack of academic freedom, insecurity of tenure, and irresponsible relations between administration and faculty make the University of Pittsburgh a place to be avoided by American teachers. An A. A. U. P. report further charged that the university permitted the opinions of donors to influence its policies. This accusation led to a legislative inquiry and a warning from Governor Earle that state appropriations to the university would be stopped unless the suspicion of undue influence by trustees were removed. Teachers in many parts of the country, suffering under only a little less insecurity and trustee domination than are attributed to Pittsburgh's big-business cathedral of learning, will watch the action of the A. A. U. P. with the greatest interest.

SIX POLICEMEN were arrested on December 18 charged with first-degree murder in connection with the vigilante attack on three men in Tampa, Florida, resulting in the death of one of the victims. The affidavits on which the arrests were based were picturesque but very much to the point. They charged that the policemen "unlawfully and from a premeditated design to effect the death of" Joseph Shoemaker "did commit an assault upon him" and "in furtherance of assault did burn, beat, and wound the said Joseph Shoemaker . . . thereby inflicting divers mortal wounds from which the said Joseph Shoemaker did languish and on the ninth day of December, 1935, did die." In addition to these arrests, two residents of Orlando, Florida, accused by Sheriff J. R. McLeod of being members of the Klu Klux Klan, were held on the same charge. It remains to be seen whether or not the special session of the grand jury called to investigate the case will return indictments. The attack was particularly vicious; Tampa has publicly and indignantly denounced it; will anybody be punished for it?

PATERNALISM oozing from every pore, Charles A. Tyler, president of the Philadelphia *Inquirer* (the owner, Raymond Paternotre, a French Cabinet under-official, is too busy in the Chamber of Deputies to pay much attention to his American property), took the witness stand at a National Labor Relations Board hearing in Philadelphia last week to answer the charge that he had refused to bargain collectively with his editorial employees. It was the first newspaper case to be heard under the Labor Disputes Act and naturally was watched with great interest by other publishers who may find themselves in the same predicament. The question of constitutionality, which has dominated the *Inquirer's* editorial page since the New Deal began, was not directly raised; the management based its refusal on the ground that the local Newspaper Guild did not represent the majority of its editorial employees, although it had previously waived that claim. On the stand Mr. Tyler, who had been vague about such details of his business as the cost of newsprint and ink, professed to know to a man the number of his editorial employees. He said there were 168, but admitted under examination that this figure was padded to include executives at one end of the scale and janitors and charwomen at the other end. He also admitted that while efforts at collective bargaining were being made, the management had adjusted upward several individual salaries, apparently in an attempt to forestall the guild movement. Since the *Inquirer* avoided the question of constitutionality and devoted all its arguments to the guild's power of representation, it is evident that it intends to leave the more important issue to be dealt with by the Associated Press and its counsel, John W. Davis, in the Morris Watson case. But despite these tactics of evasion and delay, the mere fact that the guild was able to bring a powerful publisher into court is a development which two years ago newspapermen hardly dared imagine.

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The League Struggles On

THE scrapping of the Hoare-Laval peace proposals was as convincing an expression of the power of public opinion as the world is likely to see in this age of dictatorships and high-pressure propaganda. In many respects it was the most notable victory which the League has achieved in its fifteen years of existence, demonstrating that that organization is at last more than merely a tool of British and French imperialism. While it might not have been possible for the Council to have acted so decisively if there had been no opposition to the proposals at London and Paris, that opposition was greatly strengthened by the attitude of the small states at Geneva. Nor can it be denied that the successful popular outcry against the dismemberment of Ethiopia marks a significant advance in the development of that type of public conscience which is a *sine qua non* for the prevention of war. One need only turn back to the Treaty of Versailles or the more recent invasion of Manchuria to realize how substantial the progress in that direction has been.

It is a tribute to the growing significance of collective organization that Sir Samuel Hoare defended his outrageous program on the ground of preserving the League. He was convinced, he assured the House, that the enforcement of oil sanctions would provoke Italy to attack Britain and thus lay the basis for the League's dissolution. No other country except Britain, he complained, had taken effective military precautions. His facts are essentially correct, but it is impossible to follow his logic. Although it is true that Great Britain alone had considered it necessary to back up economic penalties by a show of military force, France had promised assistance to the British fleet in the Mediterranean, and Turkey, Rumania, Yugoslavia, Czecho-Slovakia, and Greece had agreed to give military support in case England became involved in war with Italy. Steeped in the conventional military traditions, Sir Samuel apparently could not see that it was Britain's unilateral naval sanctions and not collective embargoes that first drew the ire of Mussolini and created the danger of Italian attack. Perhaps the best key to the mentality of the man who made this complaint and who is responsible for one of the gravest diplomatic errors in recent years may be found in an address which he delivered a few weeks ago at the annual dinner of the Royal Institute of International Affairs. Speaking in the presence of some forty-odd foreigners, including nearly all the leading ambassadors and diplomats in London, Sir Samuel developed at great length the familiar thesis that the British have a peculiar and almost infallible instinct for foreign affairs. We doubt if even Mr. Baldwin would concur in this judgment today.

Sir Samuel's resignation and Captain Eden's assumption of the duties of Foreign Minister have given the proponents of collective security another chance, but the opportunities which existed on December 8 can never be wholly restored. Eden's task is an unenviable one. An oil embargo is impossible for at least another month, and no action is likely to be taken in the meantime to strengthen the existing sanctions or to spread their burden more equitably on the various countries. If Laval remains in power, France may abandon economic penalties altogether. Moreover, no one will ever again take a British statesman quite seriously when he talks about upholding the sanctity of covenants or the necessity of sacrifices for principles. It is plain that for the Conservative government there are no principles above the dictates of expediency. If British policy in these past few months has been based on an apparent recognition of the value of collective action, it is only because England, above all other countries, stands to lose by war.

It would be unfair to suggest, however, that Britain is entirely responsible for the difficulties which the League faces at present. From the beginning France's support of sanctions has been lukewarm, and doubtless Laval subjected Sir Samuel Hoare to considerable pressure to obtain approval of the peace plan. Since France is in a position to profit more than any other country by a strong League, its actions have been particularly indefensible. Nor can the United States escape blame. The very fact that it is not a member of the League confers a special responsibility upon it which it has thus far borne none too graciously. Despite the repeated warnings of the President and the Secretary of State, our exports to Italy of the "sinews of war"—oil, copper, scrap steel, automobiles, tractors, and airplane engines—increased from $18,000 in November, 1934, to $584,000 in the month just past—a rise of over 3,100 per cent. Automobile sales to Italian Africa in November were valued at $71,215 as compared with $6,749 in the same month a year ago, while our oil exports—in the face of a warning by Secretary Ickes and government pressure on American shipping lines—rose from practically nothing in November, 1934, to $451,348 in November, 1935. The increase in the sales of these war materials from October to November was nearly as spectacular. Since the Administration has taken the position that it has no power to prevent American business men from aiding Mussolini in his illegal war, it is scarcely to be wondered that Britain should doubt the League's ability to enforce an oil embargo against Italy. As long as Mussolini can obtain a full supply of essential raw materials in the United States, the League has no immediately powerful weapon except the threat of military action. It is only natural, therefore, that Eden should seek a military understanding with the Little Entente and the Balkan powers. Although such an understanding is theoretically consistent with the principles of collective security, it is likely to have an extremely unfavorable effect on American liberal opinion. Most persons will not detect the vicious circle that lurks behind this attitude. American public opinion is suspicious of the League because it has not found a substitute for armed coercion; yet the United States, by its failure to cooperate fully with the League, is threatening to sabotage the most promising effort which has been made to work out such a substitute. The coming weeks will test not only the League's ability to maintain the principle of collective action in the face of heavy pecuniary losses for each of the member nations, but also America's sincerity in declaring that it desires to avert war. If the past has taught us anything, it is that peace and war profits are mutually incompatible.

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Education Faces the Class Struggle

THERE is a pleasant fiction, widely propagated in America, that institutions of higher learning stand above the battle of contending social forces. College and university professors, nurtured on the tradition of academic neutrality, have generally been unable or unwilling to inquire into their dependence on and their connections with the economic structure—into the source and conditions of their livelihood. They have of course heard of taxes and endowments, but they have taken such things for granted, like rain and sunshine, the unsolicited gifts of a beneficent providence. They have refused to admit any direct interest in the sordid conflict over wages and profits, over the division of the social income, over such a material thing as the distribution of bread and butter and clothing.

At Teachers College, Columbia University, this fiction is being rudely shattered. The economic struggle, with practically all its customary features, has raised its head in the laboratories, the lecture halls, and the reading-rooms of the institution. Students and faculty have been learning about wage disputes, labor unions, and picketing, not in some distant steel mill or coal mine, but in their own dining halls. They have heard charges of sabotage, red agitators, and communism, of spies, agents provocateurs, and unjust discrimination hurled back and forth between management and workers. Some members of the staff have begun to wonder whether their relatively high salaries may not be derived in part from the immediate and severe exploitation of labor in their own institution. And some of them are already feeling uncomfortable over the thought that the social and educational theories which they expound in their classrooms are being violated in the labor practices of the university authorities.

For three years the college has been disturbed from time to time by reverberations of labor difficulties in the dining halls. Last summer the trouble came to a head in the dismissal of a worker, a union member, who for many years had given satisfactory service in the cafeteria. Pickets marched up and down 120th Street in front of Teachers College, meetings of protest were organized by sympathetic students, and members of the faculty began to interest themselves in the matter. But owing to the absence of Dean Russell nothing of importance was attempted.

This autumn the struggle was renewed, and the situation was further aggravated by the dismissal of three more workers, all union members. The upshot was the appointment on October 31 of a student-faculty committee of five members to make a thorough investigation of the trouble.

On December 7 the committee turned in a unanimous report. Though couched in moderate language and fully supported by the evidence, the report unveiled a truly shocking situation. The major finding was a series of severe and discriminatory wage cuts during the past five years. Within this period, while the compensation of the management had been held practically stationary, the wages of many of the full-time workers, always meager, had been reduced 40 per cent. The committee also found that the dismissed workers had been "discriminated against because of their union membership and activity," and further that "the conflict between the open-shop practice of Teachers College and the desire of the men to be represented by a labor union of their own choosing is the basic cause of the problem." Dean Russell, rising to the opportunity presented, proposes to review the entire question of labor policy in the institution. Already he has taken steps to appoint another committee, composed of faculty and trustees, to deal with the broader problem.

The investigation at Teachers College is of immediate interest to those who formulate institutional policy. The situation demonstrates the absolute bankruptcy of a program of paternalism. This policy was tried under almost ideal conditions and it failed miserably. The blame cannot be placed specifically either on the organization or on the personalities responsible for executing its policies. Through its devotion to the public education Teachers College has identified itself with the welfare of the masses of the people. The investigating committee found the director of the dining halls to be an admirable and humane person, always ready to give time and funds for the relief of distress among the employees, always ready, in fact, to do anything but treat them as human beings desirous of having something to say about the conditions under which they worked. And yet under such favorable circumstances paternalism failed. If it failed here, where can it succeed?

Japan's New "Lifeline"

IN commenting on the Japanese invasion of North China, it is frequently said that the military leaders in the field have triumphed over the saner counsels of civilians at home. This interpretation may contain an element of truth, but it overlooks the fact that the financial houses which dominate the political life of Japan are among those with the greatest interests in North China. The conquest of Manchuria furnished an outlet for bellicose emotions, but it contributed little to the economic welfare of Japan. Although hailed as the "lifeline" of the empire four years ago, Manchoukuo has proved a bitter disappointment to the business groups which supported the campaign. It has failed to supply a substantial amount of needed raw materials, and its new industries have tended to compete directly with those of Japan. When the costs of administering, defending, and exploiting this region are taken into account, the chances are that it will be a heavy burden on Japan for many years. As a result the business interests have turned to North China to furnish the opportunities lacking in Manchuria.

The extent of these opportunities may be seen in a recent issue of the *Far Eastern Survey*, a publication of the American Council of the Institute of Pacific Relations. The Mitsubishi, for example, are especially interested in the possibility of developing cotton-growing, since Japan is dependent entirely on imports to meet the demands of its vast textile industry. In an attempt to develop the quality of the Chinese product, the Japanese-controlled Shantung Cotton Improvement Association distributed 47,000 pounds of American seed in 1934 and 80,000 in 1935. A five-year plan calling for the planting of some 2,000,000 acres in North China is under consideration, Japan to be given the right to pur-

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chase the entire crop. Some Japanese believe that by the end of this period China will be able to furnish all the cotton now imported from the United States. North China also has rich possibilities for the production of wool, wheat, millet, and kaoliang, though most of these are produced in Manchuria as well.

Although Japan is nearly self-sufficient in coal production, its reserves are small and it has practically no iron. Manchuria has coal, but its iron ore is relatively inaccessible and of a low quality. China ranks fourth in the world in coal reserves, most of which are to be found in the north. Shansi alone contains 80 per cent of the anthracite and 49 per cent of the bituminous reserves of the whole of China. Similarly, nearly half of China's iron reserves are in Chahar, within easy reach of Peiping. Most of these resources are undeveloped because of the lack of transportation facilities, but Japan is reported to be planning the construction of a number of railways to cut across the main north-south arteries which already exist. One would run from Tientsin to Shansi, tapping its vast coal fields, another from Peiping through Inner Mongolia to Manchuria, while still another would open the potentially rich cotton districts along the Yellow River.

Japan's interest in this area is, of course, by no means new. The Twenty-one Demands of 1915, if fully granted, would have presented Japan with virtual economic suzerainty over this entire region. But only within the past few months have Japanese business interests entered the field determined to drive out all competitors. Early in August—only a few days after Yosuke Matsuoka, who represented Japan at Geneva, took over the presidency of the South Manchuria Railway—a subsidiary of the S. M. R., the Hsin Chung Company, was organized with a capital of $2,800,000 to carry on financial, industrial, and commercial activities in China. This marked a definite change in policy on the part of the S. M. R., which has hitherto confined itself exclusively to Manchuria.

In an attempt to gain the support of the Chinese bourgeoisie, the Japanese set up several organizations, staffed by Chinese, the sole purpose of which was to soften the opposition to Japanese penetration. Most important of these is the Hopei Economic Association formed on September 21 with several score leading Chinese bankers and industrialists as members. Nanking spokesmen first represented the organization as an attempt to head off Japanese exploitation of North China through the development of competing enterprises. It soon became known, however, that members were "quite willing to employ Japanese technical advisers and to purchase Japanese machinery and equipment." The two chief organizers immediately set out on an economic mission to Japan, where they participated in the formation of the Sino-Japanese Trade Association, which has as its objective the fostering of friendly relations and cooperation between the two countries. Other bodies for the promotion of "cooperation" have been set up in North China, in the main purely Japanese organizations thinly disguised by Chinese names. Organizations of this type have furnished the spearhead of the so-called "autonomy" movement. As agencies of propaganda they have not been conspicuously successful, but backed by the Japanese army and aided by the Nanking government, the Japanese business interests appear to be rapidly annexing North China to what they now modestly term the "Japan-Manchoukuo economic bloc."

A New Secret Society

SINCE the most recent Hearst exposé is a—to borrow a few adjectives from the cinema—colossal, tremendous, stupendous Public Indictment of some of *The Nation's* best friends and favorite public characters, it might be just as well to tell the whole story frankly and quietly. It seems that about December 17—and we recall it as a dark night with no moon—a conference representative of twenty-nine organizations met behind closed doors at the Westchester Country Club at Harrison, New York. Probably because the sponsors realized that Mr. Hearst would consider it a better news story, the meeting was not publicized; the New York *American* says it was—sh!—secret! But since the members of the group have spent a good part of their lives indorsing, by such secret means as the radio, the public lecture platform, and the press, the ideas expressed on the occasion, the secrecy seems dubious.

Everybody at the meeting wore false whiskers—this was not reported by the *American,* but somebody told it in confidence to Heywood Broun and we were thus enabled to get the story. The spying Hearst reporter who was present disguised as a member of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, however, was able to penetrate the facial herbage and to recognize Dr. James T. Shotwell, Miss Dorothy Detzer, Francis B. Sayre, Frederick J. Libby, and Oswald Garrison Villard in the unpatriotic, un-American, and unsafe gathering. In a general way the subject debated was peace. In the course of the evening plans were discussed—we quote the *American*—for "a sinister obstructionist stratagem to cripple the army and navy billion-dollar appropriation bill at the next session of Congress," "to press vigilantly to abolish the army and navy sedition bill," and "to seek adoption of the drastic neutrality bill, which would virtually put an end to the munitions and allied industries." The conference, we must further state, went on record as being unequivocally opposed to the R. O. T. C. in colleges. And just to show that it was not all talk, Mr. Hearst declared that the sponsors of this international program of peace were in process of raising a quarter of a million dollars to further their nefarious schemes.

As was to be expected, Mr. Hearst was not content with the spreading of this fearful tale upon the pages of his New York *American.* He sought from Washington appropriate expressions of horror over the "revelations," and they were indeed forthcoming, in the shape of what the *American* with commendable originality happily describes as a "storm of protest." The storm as reported in the paper for December 20 consisted of a statement from the American Legion—no particular individual mentioned—that it was diametrically opposed to the program; a statement ditto from the executive secretary of the Sons of the American Revolution, one Frank B. Steele; a statement from the Veterans of Foreign Wars; and a ringing denunciation from Senator Dickinson of Iowa and from Representative McReynolds of Tennessee. Nobody else was quoted. This either means that Mr. Hearst's idea of a storm of protest does not coincide with ours or that the *American* is suppressing some dandy names until a later date. Well, anyway, Happy New Year, everybody!

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Issues and Men

A World Public Opinion Exists

WHATEVER the final outcome of the disaster into which Laval and Hoare plunged the League of Nations, it has had one great result. It has proved anew that in those countries which are not throttled by dictatorships public opinion can rule; that when the facts in a given situation are available, there is also a world opinion capable of overthrowing ministries and reversing national and international policies. Hoare was compelled to resign not merely by the indignation of the British public, shocked beyond measure by the League's betrayal by the English and French governments, but by the universal outburst of anger and criticism in the United States, in the Scandinavian countries, and in the British dominions. This was admitted at the very beginning of the debate in the House of Lords when Lord Davies declared that the Hoare-Laval surrender to Mussolini had "outrageously shocked" the peoples across the Atlantic and that the government had "stemmed the rising tide of cooperation with the League of Nations."

So Sir Samuel Hoare was jettisoned to save the newly constituted British Cabinet, and at this writing it is not yet clear whether the Laval Cabinet will ride out the storm. But enough has happened to make it beyond dispute that there is a profoundly concerned world opinion, more aroused to the danger of war than at any time since 1919, and in many quarters determined to save the League and make it the great instrument for peace that it was intended to be. That such an international uprising would not have come to pass if the proposed robbery of Ethiopia had been a slight one is probably true. From that point of view the very blackness of the British-French perfidy was a godsend. Nobody could quibble about it. Nobody could say that this was not a black but a "gray" case. Nobody could defend the offer to Mussolini of more of Ethiopia than he had asked for. And no sane or honest person will defend it today on the grounds Hoare urged—that it was the only thing to do because England alone was furnishing military and naval forces and the threat of war was alarming. Real statesmen would have foreseen this danger.

But there the fact is. The League has been saved not by the statesmen who pretended to uphold it, and imposed sanctions in accordance with its Covenant, but by the plain people everywhere and the press where it is free. In England the 11,600,000 who voted in the referendum of the League of Nations Union to stand by the League made their power felt. Everywhere liberals and labor organizations responded to the gravity of the situation, and the proposal was killed even before it was submitted to the League by Eden and Laval. It was not necessary for the Council to vote it down, nor was the admirable Ethiopian protest needed to inter, without benefit of clergy, the whole nefarious scheme. That Great Britain and France stand somewhat rehabilitated today is not due to the politicians. They who are so quick to prate about the honor of the country were the ones to betray it. If some of it is left untarnished, that is due again to the aroused opinion of the masses who, we are so often told, cannot be allowed to vote on questions of war and peace because these are too delicate and too involved for the masses to understand. Well, they understood this issue. They were quite able to recognize as black a piece of treachery as could possibly have come to pass.

Of course, the people have been tricked before. Indeed, many of the critics of the League and the cynics in the press declared from the start that "a little war had been arranged" and that it would be stopped and Ethiopia dismembered before any great harm had been done. But these writers reckoned without their host. They overlooked the fact that we have come a long way from pre-war days, that whatever else the League has done it has helped to educate the people everywhere to an understanding of international problems, and that in the United States, too, there are far more people thinking intelligently about foreign affairs than ever before. Here is a vast reservoir of power for honest and intelligent statesmen to draw upon, to turn to for aid and support. Here Baldwin and Hoare would have found, and can still find, their best protection against the threats of war of the irresponsible dictator of Italy. Here is the clearest proof that if they had appealed to all the world for support in their original course they would have been triumphantly upheld. Mussolini, for all his ability to delude his pitiful subjects, could never have held out against the response which these statesmen would have had. But no, your Baldwins and Lavals cannot work in the open, cannot follow a straightforward manly way, cannot take the world into their confidence. They must meet in secret, take counsel of their fears, while lacking the brains even to suspect to what utter humiliation their course is leading them.

Well, let some more statesmen blunder like Baldwin and Laval, and we shall not only have the smaller nations taking the management of the League out of the hands of England and France and making it a really sincere and democratic body, but we may even live to see the peoples taking a stand against all the militaristic and nationalistic policies which are making world recovery impossible. Today let us fall back upon the great achievement abroad and give praise to whom it is due. There is nothing in what has happened to make Hitler or any other dictator rejoice—far from it. As for Mussolini, he must recognize that the campaign against him has now passed out of the hands of perfidious and malleable governments. Baldwin and Laval may have forgotten that Mussolini said to the French Ambassador last summer: "If you brought me Abyssinia on a silver tray, I would not accept it, for I am resolved to take it by force." Others have not. They know that if he is to be encouraged to take Abyssinia, other dictators will follow suit, and the world will be well on the road to chaos and destruction.

Oswald Garrison Villard

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Good Luck to You, Young Fellow!

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The Nation's Honor Roll

FOR the eighth successive year *The Nation* offers a roster of Americans who deserve the applause of their countrymen. In a world in which courage is at a premium, they have been courageous; they have been intelligent when intelligence was sorely needed; either in public affairs, science, or the arts, they have made a contribution, by a particular act or in their general behavior, which is worthy of honorable notice.

CORDELL HULL, Secretary of State, for doing all in his power to enforce the existing neutrality act in such a way as to prevent our rendering aid to an aggressor, and for his tireless attacks on existing trade barriers.

HUGO L. BLACK, Senator from Alabama, for his work as chairman of the Senate Committee on Air-Mail and Ocean-Mail Contracts, which decided in favor of government ownership and operation of our merchant marine instead of private ownership and operation subsidized by the government, and for his defense of the public interest in the utilities investigation.

ERNEST LUNDEEN, Farmer-Labor Congressman from Minnesota, for his persistent and vigorous fight against overwhelming odds for adequate social-security legislation.

MAURY MAVERICK, Congressman from Texas, whose refusal to submit to party discipline was in no small measure responsible for the existing neutrality legislation.

VITO MARCANTONIO, of New York, who has been in the forefront of the struggle against social injustice, both in Congress and at home.

The AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION and its director, ROGER N. BALDWIN, for consistent, intelligent, and forthright championship of the American Bill of Rights, at a time when civil liberties are being increasingly threatened.

HOWARD KESTER, of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union in Arkansas, TOM BURKE, of the Share-Croppers' Union in Alabama, and in general the officials and members of these two organizations, who at the continual risk of their lives have fought to establish the elementary rights of the cruelly exploited share-cropper and cotton picker.

FRANK PORTER GRAHAM, president of the University of North Carolina, for years of brave, outspoken leadership in that state in education and social service, and especially for his brilliant address last August at the Williamstown Institute of Human Relations in behalf of social control in the United States and the modernization of the Constitution.

ARTHUR C. LANE, professor of geology at Tufts College, and EARLE M. WINSLOW, head of the Department of Economics at the same institution, the first professors in the country to resign their posts rather than submit to the indignity of the teachers' oath.

JOHN L. LEWIS and the COMMITTEE FOR INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATION of the American Federation of Labor. Mr. Lewis, after a long career marked by vigorous leadership but by little social vision, has now turned his great forcefulness and skill to the building of a strong industrial labor movement, which alone can give the body of mass-production workers the power they should exercise in a democracy.

JOHN A. CLARK, of De Kalb, Mississippi, who in the face of bitter local prejudice defended the case of three Negroes convicted of murder on the basis of vicious third-degree "confessions," and VIRGIL A. GRIFFITH, Associate Justice of the Mississippi Supreme Court, who handed down a courageous opinion supporting Mr. Clark's demand for a new trial.

JEREMIAH T. MAHONEY, for his activities as president of the Amateur Athletic Union in leading and furthering the movement, indorsed by thousands of his fellow-citizens, for non-participation by the United States in Hitler's Olympic games.

ANGELO HERNDON, for the courage and unwavering loyalty to his class which prompted him to return to Georgia to face the almost certain death awaiting him in a sentence of from eighteen to twenty years on the infamous chain gang.

HENRIETTA SZOLD, who at seventy-five years of age, after a crowded lifetime of work in behalf of the oppressed Jews of all countries, is head of the Youth Aliyah movement, which has already transferred almost a thousand German-Jewish children to Palestine and settled them on the land.

CHARLES A. BEARD, for his definitive and crushing characterization of William Randolph Hearst as one who has "pandered to depraved tastes and has been an enemy of everything that is noblest and best in our American tradition."

EDWIN R. A. SELIGMAN, editor-in-chief, ALVIN JOHNSON, associate editor, and the EDITORIAL BOARD of the ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES, now complete in fifteen volumes, for a liberal and intelligent treatment of controversial issues in which the contributions of the various social sciences are skilfully integrated.

JAMES T. FARRELL, for the completion with "Judgment Day" of his trilogy of the Chicago streets, one of the most significant and powerful works of the imagination in contemporary letters.

WALTER MILLIS, for his timely and penetrating analysis in "The Road to War" of the forces which drew us into the World War.

VINCENT SHEEAN, for writing in "Personal History" an autobiography which is at the same time a revealing report of the social and political upheavals of our time and a candid study of the growth of a man's mind and spirit under the impact of those events.

HELEN JEROME, for her stage adaptation of "Pride and Prejudice," and the producers and actors of that delightful exhibition.

MAXWELL ANDERSON, for "Winterset," an interesting attempt to treat a contemporary theme in terms of elevated tragedy, and Jo MIELZINER, for his beautiful stage designs for the play.

CLIFFORD ODETS and the GROUP THEATER, for the production of Mr. Odets's two plays, "Waiting for Lefty" and "Awake and Sing."

CHARLES HAYDEN and the DIRECTORS OF THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, for the establishment of a Zeiss Planetarium in New York City—one of the most ingenious and effective instruments ever devised for the popular demonstration of a scientific subject.

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How to Control the Sale of Arms

By H. C. ENGELBRECHT

THE determining question in munitions control is its purpose. Some have seen munitions control as the open sesame to peace—an obvious misconception. Others have apparently considered it a device for making wars 100 per cent pure by eliminating profiteering and the more obvious frauds. But these are not the primary considerations of governments when they set out to supervise the arms makers. As long as war is part of our political and economic scheme, official action will not be directed to weakening the munitions industries but rather to strengthening them. Munitions control boards will therefore probably concentrate on three objectives, namely: (1) to bring the arms industry into line with national policy, particularly in regard to embargoes, neutrality programs, and foreign relations in general; (2) to establish safety in transportation, especially in sea transportation; (3) to end the most obvious rackets in the industry.

Now, it may be contended that this program is not very far-reaching, which is true enough. None the less, it has useful possibilities if it is intelligently enforced. But there precisely is the rub. Control boards have shown a colossal ignorance of the business methods of the arms makers, and their attempts at supervision have been made at the point where they can be most readily evaded—at the customs. Every exporter knows that export rules are loosely drawn and that the highest fine for any violation is $50. Customs officials still operate under a law passed in 1799 which permits the filing of export declarations even after the cargo has been discharged at the point of destination. There is, moreover, no inspection of outgoing shipments, so that false declarations or evasions of customs control are relatively easy.

This system is virtually made to order for the munitions industry in its circumventing of customs. The methods employed are legion. A simple and common device is to ship munitions without listing them as such. Machinery of all sorts is generally shipped as "parts," and the assembling is done at the point of destination. Since most modern arms are nothing more than complicated machinery which can be taken apart and reassembled, the possible misleading descriptions are numberless. Moreover, many shippers of iron and steel goods list every shipment either as "forgings" or "castings," for purposes of packing and safety in transportation, and these names are handy screens for all kinds of munitions. Concretely, this means that unloaded bombs or grenades are shipped as "steel forgings," and automatic rifles and machine-guns may be listed as "machine parts." It is even possible to consider a complete machine-gun as a "component part" of a tank or an airplane, as General Ruggles suggested in the Hoover conference with the sporting-arms manufacturers. Curiously enough, official export figures in the *Monthly Reports* of the Department of Commerce list "firearms and ammunition" but no "parts," while under the item "aircraft" the notations of "engines" and "parts" are three and four times as large as those of assembled planes. Thus a goodly portion of exported munitions passes through the customs without being recognizable as such.

There are other useful tricks in this business which any resourceful exporter may employ. Some years ago, for instance, the du Pont Company sold to a Far Eastern firm some TNT which was apparently consigned to Japan. Eventually it reached China, even though an international embargo on arms was in force against that country. The du Ponts might have suspected the shipping orders given them, but they said they did not. At any rate, what happened was this: According to American regulations this cargo of TNT had to be marked either "explosives" or "dangerous," but the purchaser wanted no such notation on the shipment because, he said, anybody in the Far East would recognize that tag and the TNT might be confiscated en route. Accordingly a compromise was worked out by which the TNT was inclosed in a double container. The outer one carried the word "explosives" and thus conformed to the Department of Commerce rules; the inner one bore the notation "trinitrotoluene," which is, of course, the full name of TNT. Out at sea the outer container was removed, and the shipment then bore as label a mysterious six-syllable word which to most persons might mean anything from a drug to a radio part. The TNT arrived safely in China.

In another instance the Bolivian consul gave orders to an American company not to mark arms shipments to his country in any way that would reveal their nature. It was sufficient, he wrote, to give the address and to add "Handle with Care." These orders were obeyed, and there was no trouble at the customs.

These and other subterfuges may explain why the reports of the Department of Commerce on the export of munitions are so exasperatingly inadequate. It is impossible to get from them any idea of the extent or kind of the traffic in arms. The trouble is with the classifications. Certain primary war machines are listed, to be sure, under "firearms and ammunition." Iron and steel scrap, copper ingots, brass ingots, aircraft, and similar items are clearly set forth, and by comparison offer an approximate index to war materials. But the classifications also include such cryptic headings as "industrial chemicals," "explosives," "machinery," "iron and steel manufacture," and others which lead to nothing but guesses and arguments. Recent events have stirred great interest in the traffic in arms. Is it not time that our commerce reports included a classification called "war materials," with descriptive subdivisions, and that exporters were forced to declare the pertinent items? Sharp demarcation lines are of course impossible, but vast improvements can be made in reporting munitions exports.

Since the customs offer little hope of controlling the arms industry, a different method must be tried. The best suggestion so far made is to place government inspectors in the arms factories to supervise everything from the receipt of an order to the shipment and proper listing of the cargo. These inspectors would be faced with the peculiar organization of the American munitions industry. Mitsui in Japan and Vickers in England are able to furnish every type of war engine from complete battleships to bomb fuses. There are

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no such giant combines in the United States. The industry here is specialized, and one manufacturer builds submarines, for which he must purchase elsewhere the steel and the engines; another makes cartridges, for which he must buy brass and powder and steel-jacketed bullets; and a third turns out grenades and bombs, for which he obtains the bomb body, the fuse, the fins, the TNT, and the propellent charge from other firms. Many of these killing machines move through several plants before everything is assembled. They are then exported by the last factory to handle the materials or by a separate shipping company. Government inspectors would have to be on the alert to be sure that none of these half-finished arms "got lost" somewhere en route and thus evaded their control.

Another matter for them to watch would be the various methods of shipment and the tricks that can be played with them. Shippers designate the different ways of sending goods by the following abbreviations: f.o.b., f.a.s., and c.i.f. (freight on board, freight alongside steamer, and cost, insurance, freight). F.o.b. Detroit signifies that the point of delivery for which the company is responsible is the freight car in Detroit; f.a.s. assures the purchaser that the freight will be delivered alongside the steamer; c.i.f. guarantees delivery at the point of destination in a foreign country. There is also a designation, f.o.b. factory, under which the buyer must call for his goods at the factory. All this refers to charges for loading and shipping, which vary in each case.

But there are possibilities of evasion in these technicalities, as the Nye record indicates. Suppose there is an embargo on the export of arms but nothing is said about sales, as was the case in the Chaco war. The munitions maker thereupon sells his wares to the consul or some other agent of a foreign government, either f.o.b. factory or f.a.s. The arms company, then, is not exporting; it has made a sale and an internal delivery. The foreign agent now has the arms and the problem of exporting. With the loopholes available in customs he does not encounter great difficulties, particularly since the government's attention is fixed on the arms companies and not on some unknown exporter. This sounds like a bad case of quibbling, but it certainly leaves the arms maker in the clear. In a similar way the transshipment of arms is managed. The French weekly *Vu* recently commented on the present position of Antwerp as a point for the reshipment of munitions. Suppose a French arms maker wishes to ship to Italy. The simplest way is to route the consignment via Antwerp in Belgium. There is no reason why the French government should hold up any munitions destined for Belgium, and it does not. But when these shipments reach Antwerp, the Belgian government does not interfere with them because they are "in transit." How can such practices be stopped without inspectors at the point of production who will be able to discover the ultimate destination of every order?

A far more difficult problem for the control board would be presented by the international tie-ups in the arms industry—branch factories, trade agreements, patent pools, mutual agents, and stock ownership. As long as this internationalization is permitted, embargoes are easily evaded, new developments in arms readily reach even prospective enemies, and a nation's munitions are turned upon itself in times of war. What, for instance, does the British Vickers company care about a British embargo on the sale of arms to Italy when it has branch factories in Italy itself? Or why should du Pont worry about an American embargo in the Gran Chaco war when it could turn over its orders from the belligerents to its British ally, Imperial Chemical Industries, and collect commissions on them? These international tie-ups are certainly against sound national policy, but there are peculiar difficulties in dealing with them because the line of demarcation between war materials and non-war materials is blurred. Nitrogen, for example, has many industrial and agricultural uses; it is also essential for the manufacture of explosives. Is it possible to prohibit the widest possible international distribution of a new nitrogen-fixation process? Can a steel-hardening process be localized if it is used alike for armor plate and for locomotives? No doubt some international ties in the arms industry could readily be cut, particularly those pertaining to patent pools, stockholding, and branch factories in primary munitions, but in the borderline materials it is difficult to take effective action.

National policy would also demand that the control board be empowered to extend the list of materials to be embargoed during a war. There is such a thing as following precedent blindly. Just because the shipment of munitions was an important factor in involving us in the World War, it does not follow that an embargo on "implements of war" alone is the answer to a new war situation. Each situation must be considered realistically, and the control board's powers must be broad enough and flexible enough to lay an embargo on any items which will tend to prolong the war.

Next to making the arms industry conform to national policy, safety at sea concerns the control board. In theory the shipping rules for munitions are made by the Department of Commerce and are enforced by its inspectors. In actual practice the woefully inadequate number of government inspectors throws the burden of enforcement on the steamship companies, which issue booklets of special instructions on the shipment of dangerous cargoes and at times insist on more precautionary measures than the government requires. The Commerce Department's concern in the arms traffic is largely the danger of fire or explosions. Its rules provide that dangerous explosives must be plainly marked, that they must be loaded on freighters, and that the loading must take place at a special wharf. So far, so good.

But immediately certain historical occurrences come to mind. The Lusitania carried 4,200 cases of cartridges, and the Morro Castle on her last trip had a cargo of munitions which was listed as "sporting goods." During one year the latter ill-fated vessel transported 1,500,000 rounds of ammunition and 50,000 pounds of gunpowder to Cuba. A specially constructed magazine in the forward part of the ship housed the gunpowder. Neither the Lusitania nor the Morro Castle violated any law or the rules of the Steamboat Inspection Service. Ammunition may be carried on any passenger vessel, with or without a powder magazine. This may not be unsound policy as far as fire or explosion hazards are concerned, but the matter does not end there.

It is no doubt legal to ship airplanes and their parts, machine-guns, tanks, cannons, empty shell cases, and similar items on any passenger vessel, and these would certainly not constitute any fire or explosion danger. They might, however, endanger the lives of the passengers. The various Cuban factions, for instance, were ready to go to any length to block the arming of their opponents, and there are per-

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sistent rumors that the fire on the Morro Castle was directly connected with these group intrigues. In this particular instance the suspicions may be unfounded, but many a "patriot" in the Far East or in South America would stop at nothing to prevent the arming of the "enemy." In times of war, moreover, other considerations completely overshadow the fire hazard, as the Lusitania case demonstrated. Does not the safety of passengers at sea demand that the arms traffic be confined entirely to freighters?

The control board, finally, should turn its attention to the rackets in the arms industry. There is bribery, for example. The manager of a British arms company said: "We fully understand that arms deals are not usually done without some officials getting 'greased.'" The evidence is overwhelming that the Britisher knew what he was talking about. Why not stop this practice at the source? Let government inspectors regularly examine company books, and let them assess heavy penalties wherever bribery is discovered. A little publicity would do no harm either; the bribe takers would scurry for cover as rapidly as the bribers.

Then there is the matter of holding stock in munitions companies. A plan for arms control once proposed at Geneva included the following:

> All companies manufacturing or selling munitions shall give full publicity to their . . . stock ownership.
>
> They must not own even in part any newspaper or publish or attempt to publish any propaganda tending to create war scares or influence any government to purchase munitions.

This plan needs emendation to prohibit government officials, members of legislatures, newspaper owners and editors, and others in a position to influence government policy or public opinion from owning munitions stocks. In France and Belgium the tie-up between the munitions makers and the press is notorious, and in Britain the records of Somerset House reveal many leaders in state and church as munitions shareholders. Much sabotaging of disarmament conferences and fomenting of war scares might be checked by restricting the ownership of munitions stocks.

A service would also be done the country if the control board were given authority to examine the accounting of arms companies. Large government subsidies are annually paid to shipowners on the theory that merchant ships constitute part of our national defense. These subsidies are supposed to make up the losses incurred by the companies in operating their ships. But the figures on which losses are computed are all derived from the company, and they are said to include exorbitant salaries, payments to holding companies, fictitious cost items, and various other forms of padding. If government inspectors insisted on uniform bookkeeping which showed true cost items and payments to holding companies, perhaps the need for subsidies would disappear. Such matters have hitherto been left to special investigating committees, but a first-rate munitions control board could handle them more effectively.

It remains to be seen whether Congress will insist on a real control board with adequate authority, and whether the board will be willing and able to use its powers.

Anything Can Happen in Chicago

By EDWIN A. LAHEY

Chicago, December 18

WE of Chicago have a consciousness that gives us strength. We move with the knowledge that anything can happen here, and it lightens the burden of life. The latest example of this is the case of Robert M. Sweitzer, bellwether of the Cook County Democracy, who as an indicted and ousted public official went to trial early in October in the criminal court on the charge of withholding $414,129 of the funds of the county clerk's office, which he vacated in December, 1934, to become county treasurer. Sweitzer explained genially to the jury that he hoped some day to pay the money back, and walked out a free man, "on the road to vindication."

All this was done without apparent damage to the well-fortified local Democratic machine, and it left a cynical portion of the populace with two inferences: (a) that juries are not always very bright; and (b) that if the person involved is a good fellow, the kind people call by his first name, with a record as a vote-getter for the party, no holds are barred. The end is not yet. Sweitzer, a little giddy with his "partial vindication," as he called it, is reported to be toying with the ideas of running again for public office.

Among party heelers and the open-mouthed citizens who sit at their feet there is a residue of affection for Genial Bob. Twenty-four years of public life as a good guy and story-teller have built up something hard to tear down. Public officials instrumental in exposing Sweitzer have been hissed at political meetings. An air of hostility to the state pervaded the courtroom during Sweitzer's trial.

Politicians and other observers are agreed that Sweitzer would not have been forced to undergo a criminal trial except for his own loquacity. Dazed by an exposé in the Chicago *Daily News* he confessed all to a reporter friend and the managing editor of Hearst's *Evening American,* telling them of unfortunate investments in a process for manufacturing coal briquettes, of loaning public money to unnamed politicians, and of being a sucker generally with money that didn't belong to him. This story broke while Sweitzer was shadow-boxing with the board of county commissioners over his shortage, and even in Cook County there was nothing to do but demand prosecution.

Sweitzer's trouble began twenty-four years after he had been what he terms catapulted into politics. In 1910 he was an eminently successful salesman for a wholesale grocery house. He and Mark Sullivan, brother of the late Roger Sullivan, Democratic boss, had married sisters, and this tenuous connection with the Democracy brought the offer from Roger Sullivan to place his name on the ballot for county clerk. Sweitzer dropped his sample case and began his new career. He was elected clerk in 1910 and every four years thereafter, leading the Democratic ticket in every election he participated in, sweeping into office in years of Republican

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victories. Within a few years of his entry into the political arena he was the head man of the party, an inveterate joiner, the town's favorite toastmaster and after-dinner speaker, and the champion of amateur sport.

Twice Sweitzer tried to carry his party into the mayor's office, only to be defeated by Bill Thompson, in 1915 and 1919. These were his only defeats at the polls. A prominent Catholic, knighted by the Pope for his superlative work in organizing the charities of the church, Sweitzer in his campaigns for the mayoralty was the victim of religious whispering campaigns such as no organization except Thompson's could produce. As candidate for county clerk, however, he was never touched.

In 1934, after twenty-four years as county clerk, Sweitzer in his sixty-sixth year decided to become county treasurer, and won that office in the November elections with the same ease with which he had slid into the clerkship. When he moved across the county building into the treasury, where $250,000,000 annually must make its perilous passage through the fingers of politicians, the rafters began to creak. Sweitzer's successor in the county clerk's office was Michael J. Flynn, a hard-headed Irishman who wouldn't sign a receipt for the office and its funds until he had had an auditor check them. "Sure, Mike," said Sweitzer. "That's the correct thing. There's a few things to be fixed up, and as soon as your auditor looks over the office, I'll take care of them."

What happened in the ensuing weeks did not all go into the court record, but it is now old gossip in Chicago. Sweitzer is reported to have explained to the Nash-Kelly directing group of the County Democratic Committee that his accounts as clerk needed some squaring and that he needed some help. Nobody outside that choice group knows whether Sweitzer told a complete story of his shortage at that time, or how far the committee volunteered to go in helping him. At any rate, Sweitzer appeared shortly afterward at Flynn's office with $40,000 in cash that was missing from one of the accounts.

The auditors hired by Flynn were meanwhile burrowing through Sweitzer's records and finding surprising things. A tax-redemption fund was short more than $200,000. Interest earned on public money had disappeared; so-called "vest-pocket" funds, receipts for minor services of the office, were not to be found in anybody's vest. The auditors came through the maze of books with a shortage of $414,129, and frankly declared that further search would probably reveal other shortages. The audit was distressing to the Democratic leaders. Bob was a good fellow. Loyalty is a fine thing. But $414,129, small as it looks on paper in these days of astronomical finance, is a lot of money to have to raise for a shortage. When that fact had sunk into the minds of the Democratic leaders, Sweitzer was on his way out.

There was a decent secrecy to be maintained, however. It was late spring in 1935, and the Democratic Committee was engaged in dominating the selection of a coalition judicial ticket, allotting to the eager Republicans what concessions it chose. Public knowledge of a cesspool in an important Democratic office could probably have given the Republicans courage enough to run their own ticket.

The audit of Sweitzer's funds broke into print too late in May to interfere with the uncontested election of the coalition judicial slate in June. The county board was furnished with an opinion from the state's attorney, Thomas J. Courtney, that it would be within its right to remove Sweitzer from his office of county treasurer if he failed to make an accounting forthwith of his shortages as county clerk.

Sweitzer was summoned before the county board, in a room filled with his ardent admirers, and demand was made on him for payment. Addressing the board graciously, he pointed out that he had not had time to check Flynn's audit, and asked the board to stay its demand. He declared himself ready and willing to pay when he himself determined the amount of his shortage. At this time seven months had elapsed since he had left the clerk's office. The board gave him a week. Sweitzer made a second appearance before the board at the appointed time, and again told the members that he had not had time to determine the accuracy of the Flynn audit. Again he asked for and was granted a continuance on the board's demand for a showdown. He went his blithe way that afternoon to Terre Haute, Indiana, to attend the graduation of a daughter.

On the same afternoon the newspaper story of Sweitzer's own admission of defalcations, disastrous investments, and loans to politicians—whom he has not named to this day—appeared on the streets, and members of the county board, feeling that they had been made to look foolish, immediately rescinded the week's grace which they had that morning given him. He was summoned again to appear before the board as soon as he could return from Terre Haute. Sweitzer later declared sheepishly that he thought his intimate confessions would not be printed "until this thing blew over." He returned to town in a few days, and breezily announced to the county board that he was going to pay up immediately, that day, in fact. He had raised the money. But could the board have patience for a few hours? The money was in San Francisco banks, there was a difference in time, and it would be some hours before the transfer could be made. The board waited. The afternoon came and wore on, and old friends of Sweitzer's wanted to weep for him. Like a panicky child trying to stave off the hour of retribution, he made desperate passes, mysterious telephone calls. Late in the day the county board, finally convinced that he was faking, passed a resolution declaring the office of county treasurer vacant by reason of Sweitzer's shortage as clerk.

Sweitzer could not and would not believe that the ax had fallen. He retreated to the treasurer's office, posted an armed guard, and finally had to be ejected bodily by armed deputy sheriffs and policemen. He walked out in a daze, down a corridor lined with photographers, spectators, and scrubwomen. "We're with you, Bob," shouted a scrubwoman, tugging at his coat. Genial Bob smiled the weariest smile of his career.

Before the hullaballoo of the ouster was settled, Sweitzer was indicted by the Cook County grand jury under an old law making it a felony wilfully to withhold funds from a successor in office. No embezzlement charge was brought against him. The penalty on the withholding charge is one to ten years in the penitentiary.

The prospect of presiding over the trial of Bob Sweitzer was a nightmare to most members of the judiciary, and the case moved slowly on the court calendars. From July until October the indictment went from one court to another on all the dilatory pleas available. It was finally forced to trial in October before Judge John C. Lewe, a vigorous young newcomer on the bench. Sweitzer was represented by Bene-

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dict J. Short, a boyhood friend and schoolmate, and one of the smoothest and most ingratiating criminal lawyers in Chicago.

Short and his associate counsel, Harvey Levinson and Ode Rankin, did everything but play soft music on the violin for the jury. The adequacy of the state's audit was attacked; the indictment was a plot to wreck the integrity of the foremost political figure in the city; the defendant was being tried for the faults of a single-entry bookkeeping system. Sweitzer himself took the stand, told the Alger story of his life, of his willingness to make up any shortage if they would only give him a chance to find out what it was. (Eleven months had now passed since he left the clerk's office.) If an earnest presentation of the evidence and the sincere demands of the prosecutors, Marshall V. Kearney and Leslie Salter, that the jurors heed only facts had had any effect on the veniremen, the latter were completely melted when the defense rested.

The jury kept Sweitzer and his attorneys waiting only a few hours. The day after the verdict one of the jurors, an unemployed street-car conductor with a high admiration for Genial Bob and his works, explained: "We had trouble with one fellow for a while. He was holding out for conviction. The trouble with him was, we told him, that he had been listening too much to those state's attorneys.

Another juror, a young clerk in a downtown insurance office, paused in his work long enough to inquire timidly of a reporter who was probing the workings of the jury mind: "After all, Sweitzer said he'd pay the money back, didn't he? He's got it, hasn't he?"

He seemed a little abashed to learn that nobody credits Genial Bob with having a cent today, and the talk turned to the evidence, to the audit upon which the state based its case. "The state's audit?" said this peer of the defendant. "Was that audit the state's? Cripes, we thought it was a defense exhibit."

Arms Over Europe

III. Italy at War: First Impressions

By LOUIS FISCHER

Milan, December 5

THIS is November 30, 1935 A.D. and XIV E.F. Everything began with the march on Rome from Milan on October 28, 1922, and we are now therefore in the fourteenth year of the Era Fascista.

I came across the snowy Alps yesterday into mild-weathered Lombardy. Today I have walked the streets for hours. Every store displays a placard decorated with the national colors—green, white, red—which reads, "This Shop Sells Only Italian Products," or one of another type which admonishes citizens to purchase either Italian goods or exports of non-sanctionist countries. "Patriotic Italians Use Nothing but Italian Medicines," a pharmacy informs the passer-by. A cafe in the impressive, glass-covered bazaar and central promenade, Milan's "Gallery," warns drinkers to "Order Only Italian Wines and Liqueurs." The sign then quotes an appropriate passage from Mussolini. If sanctions continue to be applied rigorously, what is now presumably a voluntary act of patriotism will become a necessity. Meanwhile anti-sanctions propaganda serves to generate bitterness and hatred for foreign countries and to rally the population around the Fascist regime.

Books on East Africa, books on Abyssinia, books on Negro races abound in the bookstores. In every window, prominently placed, is a copy of Emilio Canevari's "British Conquests in Africa," for "by what right," runs the often-repeated Italian argument, "do the English object to our Ethiopian expedition when they have grabbed so much themselves?" By no right; but morality plays no important role in imperialist policy.

The plate-glass window of a stationery shop is covered with postcards and drawings. One painting for sale shows an Italian officer in tropical uniform. He faces a group of Ethiopian chiefs, some kneeling before him, others standing erect and giving the Roman salute. Under these is the inscription, in quotation marks, "The Enemy." Behind him, about to stab him in the back, is a hand with a long dagger marked "Sanctions." Under it is the inscription, in quotation marks, "Our Friends." I note in many places a picture postcard of a pith-helmeted Italian soldier against a background which is the map of Abyssinia. In his hand is a torch which, miraculously, burns green and white and red. On the colored flame is written the word *Civilità*, civilization.

"Give Gold and Iron to the Fatherland." On one street I saw a motor lorry pull up to a coffee and tea shop. The crowd looked on while a Black Shirt carried out boxes of empty coffee cans and tumbled them into the truck. Inside was already a heap of scrap iron and tins. A magazine for sale in the kiosks publishes a cartoon picturing a ship laden with gold steaming away from a shore. This is the "Flight of Gold from France." Opposite it Italians are depicted removing their earrings, finger rings, gold watches, and the like, and throwing them into a melting-pot. This is the "Gift of Gold in Italy."

Mussolini photographs are seen everywhere—Mussolini scowling, frowning, pouting, smiling; Mussolini fencing, shooting, swimming, strutting, speaking, playing the fiddle; Mussolini on a cannon, on a tank, on a horse, on a balcony; Mussolini bald, in Roman headgear, in steel helmet, in Fascist cap; Mussolini, Mussolini. He has a sense of the theatrical; Italians like it. In his eyes shine a fierceness and an almost monomaniacal glare which are certainly real enough, yet they seem purposely intensified for effect. The heavy, protruding chin bespeaks force and will-power; the puckered lips tell of a desire to impress and startle.

Several times as I tramped through the poorer sections of Milan I found myself thinking about my early youth. Then it occurred to me that the smell here was the same as that which hovered over the Italian district in South

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Philadelphia where I grew up. My Italian playmates, I recalled, were temperamental, boisterous, and daring. Our respective juvenile "gangs" used to hop moving coal trains and pelt one another with coal. But the Italian boys were not good fighters.

In these less prosperous parts of Milan I saw several old posters which announced that the government of the Milan province, "seconding the effort of the central authorities," offered 300 cash prizes of 500 lire each to mothers who would give birth to three live children between October 28, 1931, and October 28, 1936. Preference, the announcement said, would be given to poorer families. Nobody else, I am sure, would compete. Three children in five years! Then the Fascists contend that overpopulation makes Abyssinia a necessity for them. They themselves have deliberately aggravated the problem of excess population. Every day the dailies print official vital statistics to underline the interest which Fascism takes in them. During the last month, according to this evening's paper, there were 1,197 live births in Milan, 967 deaths, and 627 marriages. "The place occupied by woman under the Fascist regime," says an Italian propaganda journal, "is really that of mistress of the house." But she "reaches the phase of an almost religious and divine function when she . . . becomes a mother"—especially if she raises her boy to be a soldier.

This is Sunday, December 1, and I went to the gorgeous marble cathedral with its two thousand marble statues, some of them perched on thin lofty spires, its exquisite stained-glass windows, and its beautiful service and singing. Outside in the piazza a Black Shirt brass band played patriotic hymns. In the small crowd one or two persons applauded each number.

I strolled into a honey exhibit. A big wall was covered by a giant map of Abyssinia on transparent material. Behind it, filling the space from Addis Ababa to the borders of Sudan, was a steel-helmeted head of Mussolini which was lighted up intermittently. Nearby a mechanical bee dipped its proboscis regularly into a flower.

On the main thoroughfares and in side streets as well every available space on building walls is covered with posters. "Viva Il Duce," "Viva Adua Riconquistrata," viva the Fascist revolution, viva the glorious and victorious troops in East Africa, viva the King, viva this, viva that. Ubiquitous, too, is a sepia poster of Mussolini's head in steel hat. I notice, however, that many of these posters have been mutilated. Fingers have lifted an edge and pulled off a strip of the paper. Some sharp instrument has scratched a hole in the middle. This interests me. I stroll through street after street. In the central avenues a large number of posters have been damaged. In less frequented streets some of the posters have been totally defaced. I studied the commercial-advertising signs. Most of them were intact; only a few had been tampered with. I took a trolley to the outskirts of town and walked back. If this poster-tearing phenomenon was to be given political significance I had to make sure of my observations. There is no doubt about it: with few exceptions these Fascists posters have felt the hand of a deliberate destroyer. On the periphery of Milan the number of posters was much smaller than in the hub of the city, but these too had lost some, occasionally all, of their surface.

Milan is the largest industrial city of northern Italy with a population of 900,000. It is likewise the mother of Fascism. The most important Fascist dailies still appear in Milan and not in Rome—*Il Popolo d'Italia,* founded by Benito and edited by his nephew Vito Mussolini, and *Corriere della Sera,* in which the famous Signor Gayda roasts the British every morning. The Fascists of Milan also have their poster language. They write and scribble in pencil or crayon on the torn placards. They write: "W Il Duce" (W stands for *viva*), "W Il Re," "M Eden" (M stands for *morte,* death), "M L'Inghilterra" ("Death to England"). I saw "Porco Eden" twice; "M Negus" twice —the Negus gets very little attention; one "To Hell with England." Several times I read "W Binda" on walls and posters. When I inquired I was told that Binda is a champion cyclist.

Posters are the forums of modern Rome, yet one never sees "W Lenine" as one did in 1919, or "W Staline," or "W Moscow." Where are the millions of Communists and revolutionists from whom Mussolini is alleged to have saved Italy? Many have been "liquidated," imprisoned, or exiled. Many have certainly been converted. Those who remain probably are afraid or are biding their time. No unorganized opposition sticks its neck out very far under a dictatorship. Sometimes an instinct guides political factions; it is obviously too early to write Communist slogans on Fascist propaganda.

The Fascists seek to derive every possible advantage from British hostility and from sanctions. Later, if economic difficulties intervene, not Fascism or the war will be to blame but England and Geneva. What the regime tells its citizens appears from a poster which is frequently encountered and nearly as frequently mutilated.

> Milanese [it reads], the seventeenth anniversary of the World War finds proletarian and Fascist Italy aroused and rallied around its King and its Duce, invincible in the defense of its sacred right to live, invincible in its determination to triumph. Soldiers, Black Shirts, Milanese! After Italy lost 670,000 dead and 400,000 wounded in the World War—a million fallen in the cause of the Entente—Geneva moves the monstrous machine of sanctions to imperil the conquest, achieved through the valor and labor of Italy's sons, of that "Place in the Sun" which is indispensable to our existence and which was denied us by Versailles. Soldiers, Black Shirts, Milanese! Against the offensive on our lives and dignity let us strengthen our will and our tenacity in the cause of justice and civilization. Viva Italia, Viva Il Re, Viva Il Duce.

A platoon of sailors dragging some light cannon passed through the central Via Torino preceded by a Black Shirt who whistled in order to attract attention. One old man lifted his hand in the Caesarian greeting. The mass of pedestrians did not even stop to look. Generally speaking, one senses no tension in the air. There is no war atmosphere. At the frontier my luggage was not opened, and neither the border authorities nor the hotel management was very much interested in my passport. On the cathedral piazza a group of some twenty Fascists in varied picturesque uniforms and caps, with their short daggers hanging on their left thighs and Roman capes draped gracefully around their shoulders, stood for hours this morning—I saw them early in the day and saw the same ones again at the end of a long tour of town—doing nothing at all ex-

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cept attracting attention and entertaining one another. They laughed and smoked and slapped one another on the back, but only their military garb might have suggested that Italy was engaged in war—certainly not their demeanor. My impression is that the Fascists, perhaps even the mass of people, still regard the Abyssinian adventure as a big national picnic. They do not take it seriously. It is only beginning to pinch.

Today, December 2, I talked to a big textile manufacturer. He said most of the textile mills of Milan had cotton stocks which would last no longer than another month. They did not think they would get new supplies soon. All the foreign currency and gold the government had was being used to create vast reserves of oil. A felt-hat mill near Milan had raw material for another fortnight. Neither wool nor cotton was being imported in large quantities. I asked him about the Fascist corporations, the framework, in conception, of a new social order. "They are not real," he replied. "Mussolini uses them as a threat to keep us in line. State control is severe, but our capital is our own." He was, nevertheless, violently anti-Fascist. He resented the control. He predicted that sanctions would cause heavy unemployment in the near future.

The government is whipping up sentiment for a new 5 per cent war loan. One loan poster shows an Italian soldier wearing pith helmet and heavy hobnailed shoes and carrying a rifle slung over his shoulders. He is guiding a plow across an Abyssinian landscape. Another depicts a soldier with a number of spades. The purpose is to convince people that the expeditionary force in East Africa will not return. It will stay to till Ethiopian soil, and overcrowding in Italy will thereby be relieved. This remains to be seen. Large-scale white colonization in tropical Africa has no precedent. On a third loan poster stands an Italian officer and his young Ballila boy-scout son at the salute. "For your children's sake, subscribe!" is its appeal.

After working hours I went to a cinema. Cinemas are dark, and in them, therefore, people are free to express or not to express their feelings. The cashier dropped every coin on the glass top of her table and held every bill against a light. The performance started with a Luce newsreel. A ship packed with soldiers leaves a port for Eritrea. No applause from the cinema audience. Tanks run up a hill at Asmara while Italian soldiers look on. No applause. Marshal de Bono, now recalled, reviews a company of Italians near "Adua Riconquistata." One person clapped his hands together once. The sharp noise succeeded by sudden silence was worse than no applause. Soldiers sending part of their wages to their families. No applause.

I asked an Italian artisan why he did not go to Abyssinia. He said, "Let others fight." I put the same question to an employee of the hotel. He said, "Let those fight who have no jobs." He conceived of the war as a sort of public works. There seems to be little enthusiasm for the war. Sanctions and universal foreign opposition, however, have enabled the Fascists to arouse considerable nationalist fervor. It is obvious, nevertheless, that the first fortnight of sanctions plus the possibility of oil sanctions has made the regime nervous.

[*The fourth article of Mr. Fischer's series on the European crisis will appear in the issue of January 14.*]

I Am a Traitor

By WILLIAM T. LUCAS

OUR football team hasn't won a game this season, and I am the reason. I am a teacher in the local high school, and, unfortunately, most of the football players are compelled by circumstances to attend two of my classes—one in English and one in sociology. According to the rules of our State High School Football Association, each player must pass, each week, three of his prescribed studies in order to be eligible to participate in the game the following week. This season, so the story goes, from two to seven men on our team have been ruled ineligible every week. And I am the devil who has done it—simply because I refuse to do a little lying and cheating and stealing for the sake of the team.

Strange as it may seem, the new principal is squarely behind me in this. He is the man I am taking my orders from. The new principal has repeatedly expressed in faculty meetings his policy regarding athletics. It is this: "School work comes first; sports, second—or maybe third. Equal rights to all; special privileges to none. We want a team on the field we can be proud of, one that will truly represent the honor and purpose of our school. Any teacher who shows favoritism to a football player in the matter of grades will be dismissed from the faculty."

In my own experience such an attitude from a schoolman is something new. And this same new principal is still under thirty, was an athlete himself (and still is), has been a high-school coach, and is a most ardent follower of sports. Not a pupil in the school doubts this last statement; they all regard their principal as a fine fellow, 200 pounds of youth and fun and life, but a man who believes in work. If he expects to hold his job, though, he had better fire me. So "they" are saying.

I'm against athletics. I have it in for the players. A football man couldn't pass my work if he were to make a hundred. Purposely I ask the football players questions they can't answer. I expect football players to know when to use capital letters, periods, and apostrophes. I expect football players to be interested in the effects of illiteracy, the causes of crime, and the characteristics of mob psychology. In grading papers I am always hard on the athletes. If it were not so, the school would have a winning team. That is what "they" are saying on every hand.

The impression that I am the dictator behind the scenes got abroad in the following manner. At the beginning of the present session the principal, who was new to our local way of doing things, asked me to help him straighten out all the school records, and to determine just who was and who was not eligible for athletics, according to work passed and failed during the 1934-35 session. Having taught in the school for the past five years, I knew the system; and orders were orders. During the first week of school it was my unpleasant duty to pass on to the principal the information that a number of "brilliant, experienced football prospects" could not participate in athletics on our teams until they had passed off a semester's work. Any real he-man teacher with a grain of school spirit, pride, or loyalty would have kept his mouth shut, smoothed over the records, and given the boys a chance. If it had not been for me, old Tom, Dick, and Harry—all

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three—would be on the team right now. So "they" are saying.

Look at old Tom, for instance; 180-pound tackle. The minute I ruled him ineligible he went over to a neighboring school seven miles distant, matriculated, and made the football team in a walk. They didn't ask old Tom any questions at that school. The principal of that school never wrote to our principal for old Tom's credits; he didn't want to know that old Tom had passed only three subjects in our school during the past three years. Recently we played old Tom's team, and they ran all over us.

Haven't we played ineligibles ourselves in times past? Of course. We have played men who did not know what it was ever to pass a subject. We have played men who were not even in school the week the game was played. We have played men who were drunk for two days before the game. We have played men who were being paid to play for us. We have played men who bet on themselves and on the team on which they were playing. We have played men who always stopped school as soon as the football season was over, and who did not return until the following year. We have done all this, and nobody thought any the less of us for it. We have had great teams in the past, and our "stars" have been sought after by the college teams, too.

I have been directly approached about my refusal to pass the football players. I have been told that I should make allowances for them. I should not ask them any questions, or I should ask them questions they could answer, or I should give them passing grades on the questions I do ask them. A football player is not supposed "to get an education" during the season. In colleges, if a professor won't pass the football players, the players are warned not to take that professor's subjects. It should be this way in high school, but of course it can't be on account of the limited faculty. But I'm not cooperating.

"They" are saying all this, and still my principal is staying with me. They have been to see him about me, but they can't budge him an inch. He always tells them: "We want a good football team, but we want good students first. If a boy wants to play football for our school, he must first prove himself worthy by working."

I'm wondering where the new principal and I will be next year.

Correspondence

Did Bryan Put Us Into War?

To the Editors of The Nation:

I have read the article by Mr. Villard, Honor to William J. Bryan, in your issue of November 20, wherein he says he feels like getting up a mass-meeting in Carnegie Hall in New York, to do honor to Mr. Bryan because of his opposition to our entry into the World War.

I have no desire to detract anything from the Bryan record as portrayed by Mr. Villard. I was as much opposed to this nation going into the horrible mess as was Bryan or Mr. Villard. But before this mass-meeting is called I think it would be well to consider who was responsible for the Administration that got us into the war? Who was responsible for Woodrow Wilson and indirectly for Robert Lansing and Walter Hines Page, the war fans of the Wilson Administration? In 1912, I think it will be found upon investigation, William J. Bryan was a delegate from Nebraska to the National Democratic Convention at Baltimore, and was instructed for Champ Clark, as the choice of Nebraska Democrats for President. After the third ballot in that convention, as I now remember, Mr. Bryan, notwithstanding his instructions, deserted Clark, who had a majority vote in the convention, and supported Woodrow Wilson, giving as his reason that Clark was being supported by Tammany Hall.

Dr. Harry Elmer Barnes in his book "Genesis of the World War" has treated this subject with some speculation on what might have been if Mr. Bryan had observed his instructions and Champ Clark had been nominated and elected President in 1912. It is very likely that we should have avoided the unholy mess and all that followed. It has been said that Bryan did not want Wilson; that he had an inordinate ambition to get the nomination himself. That is the key to the whole situation. Mr. Bryan was indirectly responsible for the economic chaos we are now experiencing as a result of the war.

Plattsmouth, Neb., December 10 John M. Leyda

No Reward for Merit

To the Editors of The Nation:

It was with great interest that I read your Reward-of-Merit Story in the October 30 issue. I note particularly that you enjoyed your role as benefactor and should like to do more of it. Permit me to relate the story of Morris Joseph Schiller, 1376 Belt Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri—a story remarkably similar to Mr. Lauste's. Mr. Schiller came to this country in 1895 and worked as a tailor for years. In his spare time he tinkered with his machine. Eventually he developed a device for pinking and trimming in one operation. This he had patented in 1917—patent number 187,079. In 1921 and 1922 he improved upon his machine and was issued other patents.

Representatives of several sewing-machine companies called upon Schiller. An affidavit was made out and Schiller furnished these men with a sample of his newest machine. This they kept for two months and then returned, broken. Subsequently there appeared on the market four machines that embodied the fundamental principles of Schiller's or were exact replicas. Since then practically every company that manufactures sewing machines has adopted Schiller's revolutionary improvements. A golden harvest was reaped but not one dollar went to the inventor. An agent of one of these manufacturers once told Mr. Schiller that his organization was prepared to spend a million dollars to fight his claims.

Mr. Schiller is now sixty-one years old. Broken in health, he subsists on relief. This so far has been his reward for a contribution to industry that has enriched the well-to-do and lightened the load of the worker.

St. Louis, Mo., December 10 Sam Stone

Leo Gallagher

To the Editors of The Nation:

As a newspaperman—sympathetic to the defendants—who attended a number of sessions of the Sacramento criminal-syndicalism trial, I was interested in Carey McWilliams's article on Leo Gallagher in your issue of October 15. The article was obviously occasioned by the dissatisfaction and indignation felt by many radicals and liberals in California over Mr. Gallagher's conduct of that trial.

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As an individual Mr. Gallagher does not need Mr. McWilliams's whitewash. No one in California questions his sincerity and integrity. His defects as a radical defense lawyer lie in an almost psychotic excess of these qualities. A lawyer who cannot keep his head in the courtroom is of no use to his clients, and anyone who has watched Mr. Gallagher shrieking at judge, jury, and prosecutors, challenging a 250-pound opponent to a fight, or exacerbating the nerves even of sympathetic spectators with querulous harangues will appreciate the reply made by Red-Baiter Hynes of Los Angeles to a reporter who commented on the prosecuting attorney's "dumbness." "He doesn't need to be bright. Gallagher will convict them for him."

In a recent labor trial in Eureka, California, three groups of defendants were represented by a local attorney, an attorney for the A. C. L. U., and Mr. Gallagher, respectively. The charges against all were identical. The first two groups were acquitted, by a jury composed largely of workingmen. Gallagher's clients drew a hung jury.

A friend of Mr. Gallagher's once described him as "an early Christian martyr who would sizzle with pleasure." That sums it up. Some day even the I. L. D. may learn that there is a difference between a militant defense and a typical Gallagher defense. On that day more of its defendants in the West may be acquitted.

San Francisco, November 15 J. A. WASHBURN

Mr. Chamberlin and Mr. Broun

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

I read with interest Heywood Broun's spirited if somewhat imaginative reconstruction of my dark revolutionary past and his criticism of my subsequent writings, in *The Nation* for October 16. There are one or two points of fact and opinion on which I feel impelled to take issue with my genial ex-boss.

I did not, as Broun suggests, "pick" the New York *American* as a place for my discussion of the double standard of morals which some American liberals and radicals practice in judging acts of governmental repression in the Soviet Union and in other countries. My article on this subject originally appeared in the *Christian Science Monitor* and was reprinted by some other newspapers.

And I felt a little regret, on Broun's account more than on my own, when I found him expressing the opinion that I recanted my original faith because I found the Union of Soviet Republics was not Utopia. Surely the tag which some left-wingers insist on pinning to any critic of the Soviet Union, "soured, embittered, disillusioned because he didn't find a Utopia there," is no more profound or original than its familiar right-wing opposing number: "If these alien agitators don't like America, why don't they go back where they came from?"

Looking over the article that aroused Broun's comment I don't find a passage that could be construed as reproaching the Soviet regime for not measuring up to the specifications of Utopia, whatever these may be. What I did point out, with more detailed concrete illustration than I can repeat here, is that in protecting its citizens against arbitrary state-inflicted incarceration, banishment, peonage, and execution the Soviet Union is not only left at the post by imperfect America, but, in more than one respect, is trailing its fellow-dictatorships in Germany and Italy. And I believe Broun will agree with me that neither Nazi Germany nor Fascist Italy could reasonably be mistaken for Utopia.

WILLIAM HENRY CHAMBERLIN

Tokyo, Japan, November 18

The Dear Old Chain Gangs

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

Reading the very misleading article, Men in Chains, in *The Nation* for November 13, I am writing to say that I have lived more than five years in Georgia and have driven my own car all over the state and have often observed convicts employed on farms. I have never seen any indications that they were unhappy or dissatisfied. Quite the contrary. The convict labor of Georgia is happy and well cared for. I have never found such a democratic spirit in any state as here in Georgia, where we often stop to speak to the convicts, or they wave to us.

I saw a convict plowing a farm quite alone the other day, with no guards at all. I have often seen them working with farmers. They had no chains on, and with one or two exceptions I have never observed a chain on any of them.

I cannot believe that the conditions described by Myra Page are truthful, because the whole spirit of Georgia is entirely different.

I am a member of the Women's National Press Club of Washington, D. C., and was formerly on the staff of the Washington *Post* and the Washington *Herald,* and have contributed to many other newspapers and magazines. I am now director of journalism at Brenau College.

Gainesville, Ga., November 12 G. R. BRIGHAM

The League of Women Shoppers

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

We believe that many of your readers will be interested in the League of Women Shoppers and will see in it an avenue of practical expression of their social concern. The League of Women Shoppers was formed in June, 1935, to "find out and then act" in labor situations affecting them as shoppers. Their basis is to use their purchasing power, collectively, to improve the working conditions of those employed in manufacturing and selling goods they buy. They have already done this with effect in the Ansonia-shoestore, Janice, May-department-store, and other strikes. They have exposed the racket of Hyman Nemser, who, under the guise of a retail clerks' union to which no worker belonged, extorted money from the workers.

First they investigate the particular situation thoroughly; then, if the situation justifies it, they give their support in every way possible—by protest, meetings, speakers, picket lines, and so on.

The League's membership is a broad front of liberal, social-minded women who want to know what is going on and who want to do something about it. We invite the support of your readers.

New York, November 29 HELEN KAY, Secretary

Sorry

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

Owing to a curious and regrettable lapse in collaborative checking we stated in our final article on the critics that the *Yale Review* and the *Virginia Quarterly,* like the other quarterlies listed, carry no advertising. They do.

MARY MCCARTHY and MARGARET MARSHALL

New York, December 12

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Labor and Industry

The C. P. and the United Front

A DEBATE BETWEEN DAVID SCHEYER AND HEYWOOD BROUN

The Record Is Relevant

DEAR COMRADE HEYWOOD BROUN: Perhaps an introduction is in order. I am a member of the Labor Press Unit of the New York Newspaper Guild. As a guild member I have the greatest admiration for the militance, for the energy, for the patience you have shown in organizing and leading the guild in the past two years. But as a guild member I feel acutely unhappy about the political opinions you express and the political naivete you display from time to time—and especially this time about your article, We Want a United Front, in *The Nation* for December 11.

I think I can legitimately make this my business. After all, part of the prestige you have in the labor movement, part of the audience that reads and respects your opinions, comes because you are president of the guild. Even your unofficial opinions carry weight within the guild, and to a large extent create a certain impression about the guild outside. And Comrade Heywood, to be very frank about it, I think these opinions are lousy.

In writing about the Madison Square Garden debate between Earl Browder and Norman Thomas you accuse Thomas of contemplating far too much the water that has already flowed under the bridge—in short, you object to his bringing in the position of the Communist Party of two or three years or even one year ago. But you're a trade unionist now, Comrade Heywood; you've stopped being a rather romantic revolutionary, and you must realize that the Communist Party of a year ago has laid a pretty stiff curse on the party of today.

If Socialists and Communists achieve a united front, you admit that it will mean little until other "groups" come in. "Groups" is your own word, and I sincerely hope that you mean unions. For a united front that attracted to itself only such twilight fringes of the radical movement as intellectual organizations, lady pacifists, and Greenwich Village clubs would be far worse than useless.

The water Norman Thomas contemplated was not a river of yesteryear. It was a tide, a receding tide, be it hoped, but a tide of terrific resentment against the Communist Party and its policies. What were the accusations he made? First, he brought up the question of dual unionism, the old Communist policy of union-splitting, of building very revolutionary and very small "red unions"; second, the problem of "social fascism," which with its concomitant theoretical hodge-podge represented the standard approach of Communists toward all other working-class organizations. "Social fascism" in its fullest flower meant that the only thing a Communist could do in a union or a fraternal organization was to destroy it—for were not the social fascists fully as dangerous as their open brothers, the fascists?

It is significant that Earl Browder could make no answer to either of these charges beyond a couple of rather smart-alecky and entirely misleading remarks. I don't care and I don't suppose you care that he couldn't answer Norman Thomas. But the tragedy is that more important people than Thomas ask the same questions and that the Communist Party can give no answer. The rank-and-file Socialist asks: "A year ago you told me my leaders were fakers and a curse to the labor movement. Do you want a united front with fakers now, or were you wrong then?" And the Communist Party has no reply. The trade unionist says: "Two years ago you said the American Federation of Labor was an outright fascist organization and that all really militant workers should leave it and join the Trade Union Unity League. Now you want a united front with this fascist organization and with the men whose names were synonyms for reaction—with Lewis, with Gorman, with Dubinsky, with Zimmerman and Hochman. What has happened? Is it possible you were wrong?" And the Communist Party has no answer.

Comrade Heywood, these are not dead embers. These are vital questions to the class-conscious progressive American workers who must be the spearhead of any united front. Because the Communist Party claims infallibility, because it cannot honestly admit that it has ever erred, these questions, this water under the bridge, form a river dividing the Communists from the workers. If the Communist Party could somewhere secure enough guts to publish a simple statement in the *Daily Worker* addressed to American labor, saying, "For several years we pursued a false policy in the trade-union field and in our general approach to working-class organizations, a policy we have now abandoned"—if such a statement were made, it would do more toward the achievement of a united front than a dozen hurrah meetings in Madison Square Garden.

I don't think you are contributing much to an improved understanding between Communists and Socialists, Comrade Heywood. You close your *Nation* article on an extremely ominous note, saying, "If Norman Thomas actually means to obstruct the united front, an appeal should be taken over his head to his followers." Let me cite a parallel you should remember. Several months ago you and other officers of the Newspaper Guild grew righteously indignant because the Washington Guild decided not to pay assessments and wrote to other guilds to do likewise, and, in general, began to function as a separate national office. How much more indignant would you and all guild members be if some outside organization—say, the Jewish Writers' Union—wrote to your members denouncing Heywood Broun as a fat, bureaucratic (or, in left circles, burocratic) slob and calling Carl Randau a labor faker and a fascist?

This, in essence, is the "united-front from below"—a tactic which the Communist Party is beginning slowly and hesitantly to abandon as it realizes that disrupting the discipline of an organization and discrediting its leadership is not the ideal method for achieving working-class unity. And you do no service to the Communist Party or to the workers when you rather blunderingly try to pump the breath of life back into this dying tactical mistake.

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I hope this is a hard-boiled letter, Comrade Heywood. I wanted it to be because I'm pretty sore about you. You have prestige in the labor movement and among the intellectuals who can be valuable allies of the labor movement if they don't try to run the show to fit their own pretty mental pictures. You have prestige because of the important work you've done in fighting Negro discrimination and because you've laid the foundations for a really good union of newspapermen. Because you're not affiliated with any political party you can speak and be heard without raising the barrier of factional interest.

Why not use that position and prestige constructively? Don't fritter it away by indorsing every crack-brained united front or appeal for a united front just because you feel—and quite correctly—that labor unity in the face of fascism is of vital importance. Learn that unity and a strong, class labor movement are things to be achieved by hard work and good work in the organizations of labor, not in Madison Square Garden. And—if you get a chance, tell it to Earl Browder.

DAVID SCHEYER

We Still Want the United Front

TOO much that David Scheyer says in his letter there is no answer except, "Your message received and contents noted." I find nothing in his bill of complaint to change my opinion that the way to get the united front is to abandon recrimination and proceed to move ahead as rapidly as possible. If this is naive I prefer to be naive and help in the fight against fascism rather than be cut down by storm troopers while coldly twiddling a pair of logical thumbs.

David Scheyer reminds me that I should cease being a romantic revolutionist and think of myself as a trade unionist. Obviously labor, and more particularly the industrial unions, would have to be the very backbone of any efficient people's party. But that is no reason at all why Socialists and Communists should not also enter in. Scheyer shouldn't really take this "romantic revolutionist" business so seriously. That's publishers' stuff and two years old at that.

My adversary should not treat me with such condescension as an economic illiterate, although I will plead guilty to being only a freshman. Honestly I don't need to be told that only a short time ago the Communists urged workers to leave the American Federation of Labor and join the T. U. U. L. I am aware that the *Daily Worker* attacked Lewis, Dubinsky, Gorman, Hochman, and other A. F. of L. leaders. Why shouldn't I be aware of it? At the same time the *Worker* was referring to me as Hey-Gin Broun. One of Jacob Burck's best cartoons showed me as a child in a perambulator being pushed up Park Avenue by Norman Thomas. My milk bottle was labeled "gin," which was where that strange myth started. Burck has since given me the original. I think it would be foolish, just the same, for me or anybody else to fight a united front because one group had once attacked me.

Naturally Scheyer may say that he was thinking of rather more important feelings than those of a newspaper columnist. It so happens that John L. Lewis was in New York last week to address a meeting of the American Newspaper Guild. After the meeting several guildsmen were talking to Lewis about the "red menace." He was asked whether there were not Communists in the United Mine Workers. He said that of course there were. Out of his long experience as a union leader he offered some advice to a fledgling labor group: "Never refuse to work with anybody who's willing to work with you." I might point out that both Brophy and Powers Hapgood, who were once bitter foes of John L. Lewis, are now organizers in the United Mine Workers.

And, of course, I haven't any intention of saying that Lewis was always right. I wouldn't even say that much for Broun. The Communists did say some very harsh things about him a couple of years ago, and some of them were true. And while I'm indulging in self-criticism I should like to put on the record the fact that I went to Norman Thomas to tell him that I was sorry for several things I had said about him in pieces here and there during the last year. Certainly I'm in no position to criticize people for being captious if I'm captious myself.

"Learn," says David Scheyer in closing, "that unity and a strong class labor movement are things to be achieved by hard work and good work in the organizations of labor, not in Madison Square Garden."

If Mr. Scheyer means what he seems to mean, it sounds very much like the old craft-union tendency toward inbreeding and sterility. Nobody is denying the necessity of hard work, but I deny that there is any virtue in suggesting that the labor movement must be kept small and exclusive. What's the matter with Madison Square Garden? I can think of only one fault. When the labor movement begins to grow along industrial lines and doubles itself and trebles itself, Madison Square Garden won't be nearly large enough for meetings.

HEYWOOD BROUN

Contributors to This Issue

LOUIS FISCHER, *The Nation's* Moscow correspondent, is the author of "Soviet Journey."

H. C. ENGELBRECHT is the author of "One Hell of a Business" and coauthor with W. C. Hanighen of "Merchants of Death," both dealing with the munitions industry.

EDWIN A. LAHEY is a Chicago newspaperman.

WILLIAM T. LUCAS is the pseudonym of a teacher in a Southern high school.

DAVID SCHEYER is a New York labor journalist.

MARYA ZATURENSKA is the author of "Threshold and Hearth," a book of verse.

HUGH H. DARBY is a member of the Department of Biological Chemistry of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, New York. At one time he was director of the United States Department of Agriculture Station in Mexico City.

RUTH BENEDICT, of the Department of Anthropology of Columbia University, is the author of "Patterns of Culture."

H. B. PARKES, of the English Department of New York University, is the author of a biography of Jonathan Edwards.

MAXWELL GEISMAR is a member of the English Department of Sarah Lawrence College.

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Facts for Consumers

THE new General Motors Acceptance Corporation's 6 per cent time-payment plan, now being ballyhooed in radio broadcasts, newspapers, magazines, and billboards, is a remarkable example of dignified flimflam. "Simple as A, B, C, . . . a straightforward business transaction whereby you pay 6 per cent and only 6 per cent" reads the advertisement. Then follows a matter-of-fact explanation of the simple, easy-to-understand plan for which you "A—take your unpaid balance, B—add cost of insurance, C—multiply by 6 per cent," the total being the whole financing cost. The G. M. A. C. adds: *"Understand, this is not 6 per cent interest,* but simply a convenient multiplier which anyone can use and understand." Obviously, the interest rate cannot both be, and not be, 6 per cent. As *Tide,* a magazine for advertisers, dryly observes, the rate "has not been brought down to anything like 6 per cent. It is, as a matter of fact, something like 12 per cent; it used to be around 15 per cent. . . . With the 6 per cent scheme G. M. A. C. achieved something specific to talk about that didn't give readers arithmetic headaches." The new twelve months' General Motors plan, like the old, charges interest for the entire period on the amount due at the closing of the contract. This amount is reduced by periodic payments, but for the purpose of reckoning interest charges, G. M. A. C. continues to use the balance originally owed. Even buyers who can do only simple arithmetic should be able to figure out that they are paying General Motors more than 6 per cent for the "privilege of budgeting the cost of your new car . . . to your income."

* * *

THE list of expensively advertised products against which the Federal Trade Commission has proceeded is again long. Particularly interesting is the stipulation requiring correction of the claims made for Cocomalt. Its manufacturer has agreed not to represent that Cocomalt contains all the elements necessary to the growth of children, will increase energy, vitality, and weight in all cases, and contains all the vitamins, mineral nutrients, and calories.

Stanco, Inc. (Standard Oil Company of New Jersey), has agreed to discontinue representations that Mistol Drops is an effective remedy for colds or sore throats, or that it will do more than relieve minor nasal irritations or congestions.

Solvex, one of the Dr. Scholl products, in accordance with the terms of a stipulation will no longer be advertised as a cure for athlete's foot or as an ointment that will restore inflamed or scaly skin to normal.

The London Toffee Company and the C. S. Allen Corporation, which formerly represented that their products were made in London, have been ordered to mark packages with a statement that the toffee is made in the United States.

* * *

THREE actions against manufacturers of aspirin indicate that the Federal Trade Commission is again attempting to eliminate claims of special efficacy for particular brands. In 1934 the Bayer Aspirin Company was ordered to discontinue advertisements implying or stating that the word "aspirin" is Bayer's trademark, and from asserting, without proper qualifications, that Bayer's Aspirin has "no harmful after-effects . . . does not depress the heart. . . ." Now a complaint has been issued against the Cal-Aspirin Corporation, alleging that Cal-Aspirin is not less toxic and not quicker acting than ordinary aspirin. By stipulation Best Products Corporation has agreed to cease advertising Best's Aspirin as "the aspirin your doctor prescribes." Master Drugs will discontinue assertions that Lord's Aspirin will "bring more efficient relief in ten minutes as compared with the half-hour to an hour's time required by ordinary aspirin." In accordance with the drug law all aspirin must conform to the United States Pharmacopoeia standard of quality. Since February 27, 1917, when the patent expired, aspirin has been a standardized drug. Many manufacturers have found, however, that the public's ignorance of this fact makes it well worth while to advertise special merit for their products.

* * *

THE Bureau of Investigation of the American Medical Association has been looking backward, and in a recent issue of the *Journal* reviews the record of five patent medicines whose highly successful commercial history has been unaffected by public exposés and actions by government authorities. First on the list is Grove's Laxative Bromo Quinine, still a best-seller among cold preparations. Thirty years ago the A. M. A.'s analysis disclosed that the preparation contained the heart-depressing cold-tar drug, acetanilide, and also quinine sulphate and caffeine. There was no trace of bromine. In 1915 the A. M. A. reported a change of formula and the substitution of acetphenetidin, also a heart-depressing drug, for the acetanilide. The 1935 package now declares—as the law requires—that each tablet contains one grain of acetanilide. The exploiters of Grove's Bromo Quinine have thus returned to the drug used in their "cure" before the passage of the Food and Drug Act. Their advertising has likewise been unaffected by the stipulation entered into with the Federal Trade Commission in June of this year, which prohibits representations that the nostrum is a cold remedy.

The *Journal of the American Medical Association* also lists Murine, which before the passage of the Food and Drug Act was advertised as an "eye remedy" and afterward as "a reliable relief for sore eyes"; and Nurito, at present widely advertised for neuritis, rheumatism, neuralgia, and lumbago. In 1914 the Food and Drug Administration issued a notice of judgment against this product, charging misbranding. The formula then included phenolphthalein and amidopyrine (pyramidon). In 1927 the makers of Nurito declared that aspirin had been substituted for amidopyrine. Seven years later, however, the Federal Trade Commission ordered the Nurito Company to discontinue representations of the efficacy of the product, pointing out that Nurito was dangerous in some cases, and that certain of its ingredients were likely to produce toxic effects.

* * *

SEEMAN BROTHERS, distributors of White Rose Food Products, are considerably agitated because this column listed the seizure by the Food and Drug Administration of a shipment of White Rose Fancy Shrimp. Their explanation of the circumstances surrounding the seizure is informative. Seeman Brothers, Inc., is not a packer but attaches its White Rose label to products which it buys on its own specifications from packers, unnamed on the brand label. It appears that Seeman Brothers makes no inspection of products while they are being packed, and in the case of the shrimp it was only after the goods reached New York that they were examined and rejected. "At the same time," the company writes, "the Department of Agriculture made its inspection and condemned them." All shrimp now sold under the White Rose label, Seeman Brothers states, is packed in plants which subscribe to the new government-inspection service (see November 20 column).

RUTH BRINDZE

[*In the issue of December 18 Miss Brindze described the Newark Museum's Consumer Exhibit and stated that it received almost no notice in local papers. We have since learned that the Newark* Ledger *for November 10 ran a column-long story on the exhibit.*

Miss Brindze cannot answer questions regarding the merits of individual products.—EDITORS THE NATION.]

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Books, Music, Drama, Films

"Our Critics, Right or Wrong"

By JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

FEW literary articles ever published in *The Nation* have aroused as much controversy as the series just completed by the Misses Marshall and McCarthy. Armed as they were with neither a rapier nor a bludgeon but with a shotgun instead, their fire was effective over a very wide area and, indeed, reached even the present writer, who, as one of the editors of *The Nation,* might have seemed to be protected by his position behind the lines. Many of his friends and colleagues have already replied, and he trusts them to look after themselves, but he does, nevertheless, feel moved to supply a few marginal notes inspired by the murderously intended copy as it passed his desk. These notes are not in the nature of either support or rebuttal. They are, as marginal notes should be, to the side.

Almost from the beginning it seemed to me that our authors tended to adopt too reverent an attitude toward critics—not, of course, toward the particular ones whom they happened to be discussing but toward that Idea of the Critic with which, by implication at least, their victims were being continuously compared. I take it as a general rule that the more familiar one is with history the less easily one is shocked, and if the collaborators had scrutinized the whole record of literary opinion with as jaundiced an eye as they turned upon contemporary reviewing, then their indignation would at least have lacked that stimulus of surprise without which the true reformer's indignation is not possible. As a matter of fact, the history of literary opinion, even in so far as it concerns itself only with the utterances of persons of mark, is enlivened by a continuous series of *gaffes* very nearly as ludicrous as any which our authors exhumed from the recent past; and if every man's claim to the possession of decent taste were disposed of as soon as it could be shown that he had exaggerated the merits of a contemporary, then there would hardly be found anyone living or dead who could hold up his head unless he had pushed caution to the point of speaking no good except of the established classics.

Everybody knows—indeed, most persons exaggerate—the number of occasions upon which the genius making his debut was snubbed by the critical bigwigs, but for obvious reasons it is not so often remembered that these same bigwigs were at the same time lavishing unmerited praise upon nobodies. The fame of Keats has, for instance, kept alive the fact that the reception of his first volume was brutal, and that Jeffrey, editor of the most authoritative critical journal of the time, was in part responsible; but the full significance of the occasion is not revealed unless one remembers that at the same time Jeffrey was pontifically examining the merits of now almost unread writers; declaring, for example, that the poetry of Bryan Procter ranked "very high in our estimation" because its character is "to soothe and melt and delight—to purge away the dregs of our earthly passions by the refining fires of imagination." A little later his contemporary Lockhart, another of the biggest of the bigwigs, was declaring that "Jane Eyre" was "worth fifty Trollopes and Martineaus rolled into one counterpane, with fifty Dickenses and Bulwers to keep them company"; and Byron, who numbered Keats and Wordsworth among his contemporaries, called Samuel Rogers "the last Argonaut of classic English poetry and the Nestor of our inferior race of living poets."

If it be objected, rather irrelevantly, that Jeffrey is no longer regarded as a great critic, let us consider an opinion expressed by one who is still rather generally held to be the greatest critical writer produced in America: "In a vivid wit, in profundity and a Gothic massiveness of thought, in style, in calm certainty and definiteness of purpose, in industry, and, above all, in the power of controlling and regulating his illimitable faculties of mind, he is unequaled." The author of this effusion was Edgar Allan Poe. But who was the supreme genius with the "illimitable faculties of mind"? Aristotle or Sophocles? Shakespeare or Newton? No, it was none of these nor was it anyone like them. It was Bulwer Lytton. Poe, from whom a whole anthology of such weeds might be culled, also remarked of Elizabeth Barrett Browning: "That she has surpassed all her poetical contemporaries of either sex (with a single exception) is our deliberate opinion—not idly entertained, we think, nor forwarded on any visionary basis"; while, speaking of the same lady, Walter Savage Landor, now regarded as the type of austere classical taste, found "in many pages . . . the wild imagination of Shakespeare," and "had no idea that anyone in this age was capable of so much poetry." The fact that Leigh Hunt regarded her "Aurora Leigh" as "a mystic, wonderful, and immortal poem" may be somewhat discounted by the fact that Mrs. Browning said of Hunt's essays, "I hold them at once in delight and reverence"; but one might expand to fill a handsome set of volumes the collection here begun completely at random. The set would not, to be sure, absolutely excuse those of our contemporaries who rank Christopher Morley above Thomas Mann, but the mere marginal note does, I think, at least tend to allay the fear that literature cannot survive the peculiarly hideous handicaps under which it is assumed to be laboring at present.

More serious is the charge that the importance of advertising has tended to transform critical journals into booksellers' organs, and that reviewers, following suit, have in many cases tended to write as more or less unconsciously venal editors wished them to write. In this charge there is, I think, more than a little truth, and there is also, I think further, good reason for airing the fact. My marginal note will therefore concern itself only with pointing out that Miss Marshall and Miss McCarthy seem to me to fear unduly the scope of the influence exercised by the blurbist disguised as reviewer, and to forget that only that part of the public for whom and to whom he is the natural spokesman takes his opinion rather than that of a more restrained commentator. Those among the book reporters and book chatterers who do actually operate on the lowest level doubtless do help to determine *which* trashy novel shall be the outstanding trashy novel of the season, but it is not because they exist and function that *some* trashy novel outsells the better ones. And

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if our authors implied (they now assure me they didn't!) that if all the reviewers had praised "The Magic Mountain" as highly as some of them praised "Anthony Adverse" the former would have outsold the latter, then they were, I think, again overestimating the critic, to whom they were attributing not only omniscience but omnipotence as well.

The best-seller is no new phenomenon. "Uncle Tom's Cabin" outsold the works of Melville and Hawthorne; Mrs. Henry Wood, author of "East Lynne," was the publishers' delight in Victorian England; and the only persons who are led to confuse the best-seller with the best are those to whom such confusion is natural. Behind the apparent concern that the confusion should exist at all there seems to me to lie in the minds of Miss Marshall and Miss McCarthy a half-defined hope that the best and the most popular might somehow coincide, and I am bound to say that such hope seems to me to be, from the very nature of things, unrealizable. It is generous and laudable to wish for all an equal opportunity to enjoy the highest and the finest, but it seems to me absurd to suppose that the highest reaches of the human mind as developed in any society might be accessible to the majority of the members of that society. My own tenderness toward the common man is, moreover, great enough to make me prefer to see him allowed to have what he most enjoys in literature, and I should look with distaste upon any effective effort to dragoon him—even by the comparatively mild method of inculcating an awe of critical authority—into reading "The Magic Mountain" when he preferred "Anthony Adverse."

"Really vital criticism will probably not come until genuinely critical and independent minds can somehow communicate unhampered with the vast body of the reading public"—so end the articles. But do Miss Marshall and Miss McCarthy really believe that the sinister interests of publishers and editors constitute the effective reason why the "vast body of the reading public" does not prefer the more austere critics? Is it not putting the cart before the horse to suggest that inferior books are popular because the most widely read critics praise them? Would it not be more penetrating to assume that certain critics are the most widely read because they praise the kind of books which become most popular? But by an odd coincidence what I am trying to say was much better said in the same issue of *The Nation* by one of the critics whom our authors singled out for praise. In two magisterial sentences Louis Kronenberger remarks: "It is very seldom, of course, that a critic who becomes widely influential with the general public is a good critic. He is usually its superior in articulateness, not acumen."

Poetic Poetry

The Seven Sins. By Audrey Wurdemann. Harper and Brothers. $2.

LAST year Miss Wurdemann published a book of short lyrics, "Bright Ambush," which showed such competence in assimilating the clichés and attitudes of current magazine verse that her future seemed to be assured. The Pulitzer award which crowned her work therefore did not come as a surprise. Here was one who could rewrite the best second-rate poets and make them sound more themselves than themselves. Her favorite source of inspiration was Elinor Wylie, and she managed to smooth down Mrs. Wylie's style till it was divested of even that slightly meretricious distinction that was hers. For Miss Wurdemann's verse springs from that bastardized form of the romantic tradition that is the fountain source of our popular magazine verse, a tradition that stems not from the best of Keats, Shelley, and Byron but from their diluted progeny, Leigh Hunt, Tom Moore, Barry Cornwall, Felicia Hemans, Letitia Landon, on to Gabriel Rossetti and Swinburne at their lushest, on to Tennyson at his sweetest. Nor is the influence of Felicia Hemans and Letitia Landon overestimated I think, for they brought feminine adaptability and softness—the brutal will just call it charm—into a movement that was once revolutionary. Their feminine charm soothed even the sharpest critics of their day into gallant if slightly embarrassed acquiescence. We need only remember that Shelley as a young man was rather taken with Felicia Hemans's verse, that Wordsworth, harsh to contemporaries, referred to her as "that gentle spirit, pure as an angel and as good," that Letitia Landon sold almost as well as Byron, to realize how much encouragement these women popularizers of the romantic movement received, until their school reached its climax in Elizabeth Barrett Browning and our own Edna Millay.

"Bright Ambush," in the last analysis a lineal descendant of the works of these ladies, exhibited an appalling facility—shopworn subject matter handled in the most pleasant and shopworn manner. Possibly these qualities made its author ripe for the praise of Percy Hutchison and the magazines that support the aesthetic standards of the Poetry Society of America. "She seems one with the older poets," says Percy Hutchison. To the reviewer who assumes the thankless task of putting her work under exact analysis his meaning is more apparent than it is to Percy Hutchison himself. For Miss Wurdemann, in her latest book as well as in "Bright Ambush," is already fixed in her poetic attitudes; her platitudes are static in maturity; it is difficult to see how she can ever change. If one wishes to make allowances for Miss Wurdemann's youth one has only to open Ann Winslow's "Trial Balances" and examine the work of the young poets included there, many of them much younger than Miss Wurdemann. Here are intellectual eagerness, a willingness to grapple with the serious problems of the poetic art, a spiritual awareness. Even from those who are not experimenting with form, one gets an exhilarating impression of writers enriched and not enfeebled by the difficult task of working within the disciplined limitations of a tradition.

In the narrative sequence "The Seven Sins" Miss Wurdemann drops the delicate quivering before obvious prettiness that is so often mistaken for sensitiveness and tries to be big, powerful, grim, and philosophic. It is a difficult job, and Miss Wurdemann is completely unequipped for it. The Seven Sins are personified by seven brothers who upon the death of their father go out into the world "lusting to live alone." We are then told how the life of each of the brothers was made or marred by the possession of his particular one of the deadly sins; all this in the loosest of blank verse interspersed with lyric interludes. Miss Wurdemann's maturity in platitudinous statement is given full play, as is her gift for the obvious rhyme, the shopworn phrase. One has only to cite a few passages from "The Lease of Lust," the poem about Brother Stephen who personifies Lust or, as I should say, The Lustful Way of Life.

There is always a window,
A face looking out,
Laugh to her, sing to her
Turn you about.

* * *

There is always a window,
There's always a girl
Who will give a bright blessing
A kiss and a curl.

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Or:

> Stephen the lover, Stephen the leman
> Left the boy he was on the farm for a blur
> And any man with a thirst for women
> Can find a woman thirstier.

Her talent for repeating platitudes with an air of wisdom can best be illustrated in this verse:

> Oh, Stephen was a lover, a lover brave and bold
> But the hotter burns the fire, the chillier is the cold.

If I seem unfair I can only refer the incredulous reader to the other poems in the book. He can find in any one of them passages to match these. The book ends on a dreamy, quivering note with a strong echo from Tennyson's "Merlin."

> Before any breathing
> Came to earth,
> Before there was Merlin
> To see the gleam,
> There was sleep,
> Sleep and dream.

Miss Wurdemann's moral is then summed up in an epilogue in which Priapus, Pan, and Prince Apollo are invoked in a curious mixture of Wylie and Swinburne.

> The urge of each is the strength of man
> Is a flying lash, and a flight to follow.

The book is also hampered by illustrations.

MARYA ZATURENSKA

Feeding Ourselves

Nations Can Live at Home. By O. W. Willcox. W. W. Norton and Company. $2.75.

TWO modern trends are brought together in this book with such clarity and logical force as to command attention. First, the author evaluates autarchy—national self-sufficiency—in terms of population pressure per unit area, and determines the number of people that each unit of area can support with necessary food materials, under existing conditions. Secondly, he presents the new agricultural approach to crop production, to show that with improved methods much larger populations could be supported by a unit area of soil. As the pressure of population on the soil is the basic cause of the present Italian war with Ethiopia and the recent Japanese invasion of Manchoukuo, any method of relieving this pressure is of fundamental interest. The possibilities of scientifically controlled industrial agriculture are given an excellent exposition.

"In plain terms, a soil need not be made much richer to support 40,000 people per square mile under the new agrobiology than to support a population of 2,000 under the empiricism of the old, ineffective, but still largely prevailing agronomy." Wherein lies the difference between the old agriculture and the new? First, in the selection of plants of proved high productivity; second, in supplying raw materials—nitrates, phosphates, and the like, and water—at the time they are needed (this is so obvious that it is hard to realize that innumerable farms with adequate water supplies available still depend on variable rains); third, in the production by geneticists of plants especially adapted to special conditions. The plant geneticist should be to the farm what the designer of machinery is to the factory. Under these conditions crop yields can be multiplied, and a correspondingly greater population supported by a given unit area. Some of these factors are already at work. In Hawaii, while the acreage under cultivation in sugar cane increased only 5 per cent from 1923 to 1932, the tonnage of sugar produced increased by 93 per cent owing to a new variety of cane.

Based on the foregoing type of facts and the needs of a population, the author finds that many badly congested countries, including Great Britain, Italy, and Japan, have enough agricultural area and water within their own boundaries to supply their own people with food. He suggests that if Great Britain, instead of spending $300,000,000 a year on its fleet, used a quarter of that sum on fertilizing its arable soil and on obtaining superior types of plants which already exist, it would in a few years become self-supporting.

Several points in this book will be ardently denied by workers in the agricultural experiment stations. That will be due entirely to the fact that the mechanical concept of the plant either has not reached them or is distasteful to them. Although any schoolbook carries the dictum that the plant is a natural factory, deriving its energy from the sun and its raw materials for synthesis from the soil and air, few farmers and fewer agricultural experts regard the plant in that light.

When the day comes for a planned economy, this book and its predecessor, "Reshaping Agriculture," will serve as useful guides.

HUGH H. DARBY

Travelers in West Africa

Africa Dances. By Geoffrey Gorer. Alfred A. Knopf. $3.50.

A YOUNG Englishman with a habit of wandering and a Negro dancer, a gifted young man of Senegal, met in Paris and planned, over their apéritifs, to see West Africa together. They got a car in Dakar and two Wolofs as interpreter and chauffeur, and started off inland on a great loop that took them as far east as Dahomey. They had set out to see West African dances, and they necessarily chose back roads and villages off the main highways.

Mr. Gorer has vividly set down the record of their journey. The region through which they traveled is bizarre and lends itself easily to a taste for diabolism; it is the country over which Seabrook has gloated. Mr. Gorer is no sensationalist, and he is an intelligent recounter. If we are sane, he says, the Negroes of West Africa are mad, and he liked them. Unfortunately dances, even the strange dances of the Ivory Coast, are hard to render in words and harder yet in snapshots. What could be recorded was his impression of the natives and of their plight under French and English rule. His book is therefore made up largely of such comment, and it sets a high level in travel books. The author would be the first to say that in his casual passage through their territory he had not plumbed the customs of the tribes or plucked out the heart of their mystery, but he was interested in the things that are really interesting, and he sets down what he saw and heard. Inaccuracies are inevitable, but there is no make-believe. His descriptions of dances are as good as such accounts can be; his account of the dance of throwing the children upon the lifted swords should be compared with Seabrook's account of the same dance. I think it comes off much better in Mr. Gorer's less sensational description.

When the author started out on his travels he had no interest in colonial administration and definitely meant to avoid the subject. Once in the heart of French West Africa and the Ivory Coast, however, he discovered that French misrule was not an academic subject but the daily tragedy of several million blacks. He quotes a statement in a conservative French paper that the population of French Equatorial Africa has been reduced 90 per cent in twenty years. This depopulation, which is obvious in French West Africa but for which no figures are available, is due not only to the prevalence of malnutrition and tuberculosis, and the spread of tropical scourges with which the inadequate medical services are not equipped to deal, but to the migration of thousands of villages into "England"—the Gold

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Coast, Togoland, and Dahomey—where military conscription, terrorism, and the head tax are not the order of the day. The death-rate of the conscripted Negro soldiers of French West Africa is officially stated to be 50 per cent. The plight of the Negroes under the French administration is a situation dark with tragedy, and one which follows with fatal inevitability from the French system. The highest administrators in these colonies receive a maximum salary of $1,000 a year, and the specific administrative measure to prevent them and their even more poorly paid subordinates from stripping the country for their profit is the decree that no administrator may stay more than two years in one colony. The results are obvious; the reign of terror is on. Mr. Gorer has written an account which may well be more convincing to many people than a learned compilation of administrative facts.

RUTH BENEDICT

The Oneida Community

A Yankee Saint: John Humphrey Noyes and the Oneida Community. By Robert Allerton Parker. G. P. Putnam's Sons. $3.75.

THE most important legacies of Christianity are its doctrine of divine immanence in nature—which implies that every part of human nature is potentially good, and which is symbolized in the myth of the resurrection of the body—and its faith in the progress of mankind toward a kingdom of freedom. These beliefs have usually been suppressed in the Christianity of the churches, but they become explicit in certain forms of mysticism—mysticism which, whether it calls itself Christian or anti-Christian, is still a product of the Christo-European tradition. John Humphrey Noyes is the one American who belongs in the same category as the great European heretics. Born into a New England community and never wholly freeing himself from Puritan modes of thought, he was endowed with an intellectual boldness and a capacity for growth which make him a more significant figure than Thoreau with his chilly self-sufficiency or Emerson with his Yankee caution. Noyes, like many of his New England contemporaries, believed that the millennium was approaching; to this extent he was still the victim of Puritan mythology. What set him apart was that, instead of waiting for supernatural intervention, he set himself to grasp the implications of such a doctrine. If the Kingdom of God was to be achieved on earth, then no part of human nature should be suppressed; he avoided both that subordination of the human reason to the dogmas of faith and that fear of sensuous pleasure which had characterized orthodox Christianity. And if human society was to become perfect, then it must be cleansed of that sense of private ownership which led inevitably to conflict and to the feeling of individual isolation. In the Oneida Community, which Noyes organized, sexual jealousy was avoided through the institution of group marriage, and personal acquisitiveness was replaced by communism. Unlike the founders of other American colonies, however, Noyes realized that human nature must be changed as well as human institutions. The members of the community were carefully indoctrinated and disciplined into the new way of life, partly by Noyes himself, whose emotional richness and breadth of experience made him well fitted for psychological guidance, and partly by the practice of mutual criticism. Ultimately the community was unable to withstand the pressure of the acquisitive society by which it was surrounded, and it relapsed into a commonplace joint-stock corporation; but it had been a successful embodiment of Noyes's doctrines for more than thirty years.

Noyes was at one and the same time a medieval heretic and a utopian socialist. The combination is not so strange as it might appear at first sight, since even Marxist socialism is, in part, an offshoot of the Christian tradition. The dialectic, to the extent that it is used to prove an absolute law of development, and the faith that this development will lead mankind into a kingdom of freedom were derived by Marx from Hegel, and by Hegel from the medieval mystics—from Eckhart and Nicolas of Cusa. But whereas Marx wholly freed himself from theological modes of thought and reinterpreted his mysticism in scientific terms, Noyes set medieval theology and modern socialism in a bewildering juxtaposition. While exploring the methods by which an ideal society might be created, he declared himself to be under the direct guidance of Christ; separating the amative from the propagative function, he rejected the use of contraceptives because he could not find that they had Biblical sanction; beginning with the hope that faith-healing would free mankind from death, he ended by experimenting with selective breeding in the belief that immortality belonged to the species, not the individual. The curious persistence with which he clung to the beliefs of his forefathers—a persistence due chiefly to the sectarian narrowness of the society into which he had been born—prevented Noyes from realizing the full potentialities of his nature. He was a human being of the same kind as Eckhart or Blake or Nietzsche, but not of the same rank; his writings, in spite of their flashes of insight and of the curious experiences which they record, have no literary value.

This is the first complete biography of Noyes which has been published; the two admirable volumes of Mr. George Wallingford Noyes deal only with his early years and do not cover the Oneida experiment. Mr. Parker has a considerable knowledge of religious psychology, he is sympathetic, and he writes well. He is not always wholly accurate—he has not, for example, understood Noyes's peculiar opinions about the millennium; but he is a reliable guide to the facts of Noyes's career and to the organization of Oneida. Nevertheless, a reading of his biography leaves one with a feeling that he has made use of the wrong instruments. Noyes was a man who lived with the most extraordinary intensity; he had, moreover, those messianic illusions which so often characterize those who are conscious of genius and who feel themselves to be ahead of their own time. To give a lifelike portrait of such a man urbanity and sophistication are not enough; it is necessary either to be a disciple or to possess something of the same temperament. This book is a useful and interesting study of a sociological experiment; it is not, however, quite the biography which Noyes himself deserves.

H. B. PARKES

That Rebus

Three Flights Up. By Helen Woodward. Dodd, Mead and Company. $3.

ABOUT ten years ago Helen Woodward published a chatty, unpretentious, and perplexing autobiography. "Through Many Windows" was valuable as a modern success story, a manual of business efficiency, and a penetrating disclosure (before such disclosures were fashionable) of the follies of advertising. But it was chiefly valuable for its portrait of that rebus, Helen Woodward. Here was an avowed radical and a hard-boiled capitalist. Here was the ideal illustration of American individualism—but the illustration insisted on openly condemning individualism. Here was a person who blended the most visionary ideals of social justice with the most cynical trade ethics. Here was a Jew who loved her race and preferred Gentiles. Here was a confessed neurotic who functioned beautifully, a wise critic of humanity and a

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vendor of trite wisdom, a militant suffragette who despised women.

We read Helen Woodward's second autobiography with these puzzles in our mind. What do we find? A narrative of a seemingly desperate childhood based on insecurity and poverty. A father who is an idealistic intellectual, warped by fate into a thwarted cigar-maker, left with two passions—socialism and horse racing; a father who walks ten miles daily to save sixty cents a week. His wife, an austere, inhibited, realistic peasant, with perspiration her only cosmetic, with no sympathy for socialism nonsense. "You have a home and children, haven't you?" she asks the father. A barren, dark, and ugly railroad flat that was always tense with the conflict between these two ruling personalities. A home life established on the volcano of poverty: strikes, the father losing his job, another job in another city, another utopian vision of better times, another failure. The girl Helen growing up in the midst of this, an insignificant, clumsy little girl who wore glasses to conceal her eyes, who was terrified of broken dolls, who dreamed that the smoking elevated engine was pursuing her, who owned one book—"Stanley in Africa." And we discover finally that this childhood "is always spring" to Helen Woodward, that these years are "bathed in glittering sunshine."

There is much more detail, too much detail without focus: the customs of the immigrant Jews, the habits and thoughts of the respectable poor, the description of cigar-manufacturing, the street scenes of East Side New York in 1880, the treatment of children, the pathetically jolly German Socialist picnics. Some of this is effective, some of it is blurred by lack of structure, by a style that is close to being awkward, by—at times—a curious emotional insensitivity.

We end the book, alas, more puzzled than ever. We know only one thing: this autobiography will annoy and disturb all those groups of people who are busy explaining the world in terms of one idea or another. Helen Woodward won't fit into anybody's pattern. The Marxist will contend she is the official Pollyanna of the proletariat. The psychologists will puzzle over the childhood fears and inferiority pattern of this well-adjusted mechanism. The prophets of impending doom will rage at her cognizant optimism. The modern realists will agree with the skeptical irony of Mrs. Woodward's flapper friend: "You have one of those big, soft hearts!" The critics will be perplexed at a disappointing book that is not really so disappointing. But Helen Woodward will go on demonstrating that human nature, like truth, is complex, perverse, and, save for its own point, pointless.

MAXWELL GEISMAR

Galsworthy

Forsytes, Pendyces, and Others. By John Galsworthy. Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.50.

THIS posthumous collection includes critical notes, plays finished and unfinished, several short stories, and the discarded opening chapters of a novel; for all its fragmentary air it is comprehensive enough to give the reader a good working idea of John Galsworthy. During his life he was vastly overrated. A great deal of the time he was so hopelessly bad that it is a mystery how he ever got into print, much less became the prominent literary figure that he was. He had very little force. He was essentially British, in the sense that makes one wonder how the British manage to produce literary geniuses; he represented the practical, complacent, judicial side of the national picture—the side that shows itself to best advantage at the Ministry, in Parliamentary debates, or beside a whiskey and soda at a gentleman's club. Throughout his career, at no matter what period of his "development"—if so ambitious a term may be applied to what was merely a succession of repeated marches over the same ground—he was capable of turning out shoddy pieces of criticism like his tributes to Shakespeare and Anatole France, or stories like "The Black Coat" or "A Patriot"—which would disgrace the copybook of a schoolboy. Tolerance is the virtue for which he was chiefly noted; but it was the kind of tolerance that sprang not so much from urbanity or *noblesse oblige* as from intellectual flabbiness combined with a grave lack of moral fervor. His values, spiritual as well as artistic, were dim; his idealism was so vague and confused that it was often forced for its final solution to rely upon all the vulgar tags and slogans which it had shown itself anxious to avoid.

And yet he had something. Imagination may be too strong a word for it; but it is not to much to say that he drew to a degree upon the imaginative faculty. He never created one complete character, but on occasion he could recognize character. There were times when he came perilously near to casting aside his prudent, easy sentiments and speaking the truth—as a lesser Conrad or a lesser Henry James might have spoken it. Somewhere beneath all the platitudes, fake heroics, and commonplaces of style there was, if one may use the expression, an excellent second-rate novelist. What happened to him—whether he perished for want of air in Edwardian drawing-rooms, or whether he needed for his development an amount of struggle and opposition that never fell to his lot—is material for a fascinating novel, a far more fascinating novel than Galsworthy himself ever produced.

HELEN NEVILLE

Diaghileff

Diaghileff. His Artistic and Private Life. By Arnold Haskell. In Collaboration with Walter Nouvel. Simon and Schuster. $3.75.

THE Diaghileff here portrayed is in sharp contrast to the sinister figure that made the sensation of Romola Nijinsky's life of her husband. Necessarily he was there seen from one angle only, his relation to Nijinsky, but this is the study of a whole personality and a career that had an important creative relation to the whole art life of a generation. The Nijinsky incident thus is seen in an entirely different perspective. There is nothing sensational about this sober presentation, which seeks to interpret all available facts, which neither glosses nor romanticizes its subject's character.

In the background and activities of Diaghileff's youth, now for the first time made public, the author finds the key to the consistency of Diaghileff's career. A remarkable figure emerges, a great impresario, but much more than that, a creative genius whose ideas swept the Western world, who thoroughly understood and gave direction to the synthesis of painting, music, and dance that produced a new art of the ballet, though he himself never painted, composed, played, or danced. He appears as a sort of human life-force working through others, a catalytic agent for talent. Diaghileff's work falls broadly into three periods: the study of the past, a fundamental aspect not generally recognized, the search for a new aesthetic, and the reconciliation of classicism and modernity—one may say also the fusion of Russian and European currents.

The difficulties of collecting this material were great, involving endless trips, visits, conversations, and much sifting of contradictions, inevitable where there are few records and much personal feeling. Diaghileff hated publicity and left few letters. Some information was withheld, some recollections clashed, other memoirs of Diaghileff are in progress. So much the better, for he was closely associated with many of the most interesting artists of his day.

CLARA GRUENING STILLMAN

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Music

A Bright Evening, with Musicians

CONCERNING a recent concert at Town Hall under the auspices of the New Music Society—with a symposium by four speakers on "Music in the Crisis." Much more was said during this exceptionally stimulating evening than I could detail, but I should treat at least some salient features.

Aaron Copland began by pleading the cause of the contemporary composer. He complained that since only about one-eighth of our programs is devoted to new work, concerts are little more than museums. He offered a variant of the *Zeitgeist* doctrine, holding that if audiences are to feel a closer relationship to the music they hear, there must be an element in the composer's work "that is somehow an expression of the times." He did not discuss the ways in which a work is or is not contemporary. If we take a long view of history, for instance, considering cultural trends in terms of millenniums rather than decades, we may treat Palestrina as a contemporary of the present, since he belongs to the same continuity as we. And in a short view of history a work written in the twenties has ceased to be contemporary in the thirties.

If art is treated as a commodity—and it now is, though the producers of serious art frequently get less pay for their services than even the pickers of cotton—Copland's complaint is justified. He may rightly ask for more than one-eighth representation of new work on our programs, though this proportion of new to old would be generous from the purely mathematical standpoint. Perhaps the problem will not be solved until art ceases to be considered as a commodity at all. An artist would then be paid for some material services, such as running an elevator or repairing tractors, and his music would be offered to society without charge, quite as a man does not expect to be paid for loving his children. Copland also noted how composers, through being divorced from audiences, tended to develop along tangents of their own. With no one to address, they gratified their sense of communication by tinkering with the medium of communication itself—as one on a desert island might make up a new Esperanto. Accordingly they became too recondite for the layman. He noted the present desire of the composer to simplify this language in the interests of livelier response from the layman, but he admitted the risks of oversimplification.

Copland was here formulating the problem of the expert. Specialization, extreme differentiation of function, is an integral feature of industrialism. An expert in dentistry can far outstrip his patient in the development of his craft and still "communicate"—the communication residing in the removal of the pain and the soundness of the filling. But the aesthetic specialist faces an anomaly. He works in the medium of communication itself; yet by developing it as a specialist—thus doing his utmost as a workman—he threatens to make communication impossible. I doubt whether there will ever be a final answer to this dilemma. It is an irreconcilable dualism inherent in our complex social structure.

After Copland's talk Mordecai Bauman sang two songs by Charles Ives. They were offered as evidence of the ills caused by aloofness from the public. Ives, who anticipated much of Strawinsky and Schönberg, worked in isolation. At times, we were told, he got so far from the tests of production that his lines are practically unsingable. The second song in particular, "Charlie Rutledge," was received with fervor. Though he had developed his resources without reference to a public, he was now found to have a rousing public. In this instance the specialist had been vindicated. The work's somewhat playful exaggeration—in the big, bold, Wild West, tall-story manner—offered good opportunities for acting on the part of the singer; and Bauman rendered it briskly.

Then came something that made the audience a bit sad. Oscar Thompson spoke earnestly in behalf of the critic as impartial, aloof, and Olympian. The critic must not represent "some group, some clique, some movement." Unfortunately the speaker gave no specific tests of this method. There followed five short piano pieces by Schönberg, received respectfully but without fire. (Musicians' music—the "problem of the expert.")

Next a meaty essay by Eisler on Music's Purpose in Society. "The crisis in music being part of a general crisis, music itself must help in removing the crisis." Eisler is our best example of simplification in the interests of propaganda. He takes the limitations of the human voice as his starting-point—thereby getting a practical norm wholly denied those of instrumentalist emphasis, who, like our modern architects, would base their forms on the almost chaotically limitless resources of new materials. He gave many specific recipes for avoiding the music temple of nineteenth-century "appreciation," and for making music serve political gatherings precisely as, in an earlier age, it had served religious gatherings. Some would call "let us be on the side of the angels" poetry and "let us be on the side of the party" prose; in so far as you agree, you will tend to resist Eisler.

Cowell closed the evening with a discussion of The Present Trend, followed by a March written by himself. It was made by maintaining a somewhat pleasant melody against thunder in the bass. For a time the thunder grew alarmingly and threatened to predominate. But there was a fairly happy ending as the pleasant melody, though not completely victorious, regained the ascendancy. Received with acclaim, the piece led to a brief "satire on advertising." The subject offered a pretext for Cowell to let loose his "tone clusters" in an elbowing of scrambled recommendations.

Perhaps, all told, nothing was permanently "solved." But for one evening, at least, much of the composer's plight was solved. Astute people who stayed away weren't so astute either. I have been to no other concert of new music that elicited so much zeal from the audience.

KENNETH BURKE

Drama

On Good Intentions

JUST after I had written the review of "Paradise Lost" which appeared in this column last week, I received my copy of a letter broadcast to the critics by the Group Theater. Inasmuch as I have usually given very warm support to the plays produced by this organization I think I may comment with friendly frankness upon the second paragraph of this letter. It reads as follows:

> It is really astonishing to find plays that the reviewers obviously do not think about twice complimented as being a swell evening's entertainment, while they write reviews of a play by an author they unmistakably admire which give the impression that because the play is not quite immortal it is inferior to the run of here-today-gone-tomorrow amusements. We believe it would show far more regard for the theater and for its best public to hold one's reservations of such a play as "Paradise Lost" for studied critical essays in the future and to say right away that it is one of the truly important contributions to our theater—one

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of the plays that place the theater in the realm of deeply enjoyable art. We believe that when an author of Clifford Odets's caliber writes so rich and varied a play as "Paradise Lost," the least that one might expect is a clear-cut statement to the effect that every sensitive theatergoer must by all means see it.

Seldom, it seems to me, have I observed a blither leap from a false premise, through a spectacular *non sequitur,* to a conclusion which begs the question. Of course we critics apply different standards to the judgment of different plays. Of course we call a good farce good without meaning to imply that it deserves the same sort of praise as a tragedy equally good in its own more exalted way; and no one would have been angrier than Mr. Odets or the Group if "Paradise Lost" had been described as a skilful *tour de force* which, of course, no one would take seriously. But that is not all. A pretty good tragedy is not better than a very good farce. A pretty good tragedy is, like a pretty good egg, terrible; and to prefer a pretentious play which doesn't come off to an unpretentious one which does is not to demonstrate refinement of feeling and an exalted mind; it is merely to reveal oneself as a highbrow, a prig, and a "serious thinker." Moralists may continue to dispute just how much good intentions should count for in the realm of action. Perhaps the road to heaven is paved with them. But in the realm of art they count for nothing, and to say that an artist "means well" is not to say anything at all in his favor. As an old theatrical locution has it, "He's good to his mother but he's a bum actor."

As a matter of fact, and cruel as it may seem, good intentions in a bad play are not an extenuation but an aggravation. The artist as artist cannot expect to rely on a heaven in which the broken arch may be completed, and an essential part of the skill which constitutes him artist is the skill which enables him to take care that his reach shall *not* "exceed his grasp." Mr. Odets is a very "promising" playwright, and perhaps even more than that. But there is in this very fact every reason for judging him by standards complimentary in their severity and every reason against refusing to say that a play vastly inferior to "Awake and Sing" is precisely that. But let me not be misunderstood. "Paradise Lost" is not simply a play not quite worthy of its author. There was a simple reason why I did not "say right away that it is one of the truly important contributions to our theater." The reason is that I did not find it such. "A clear-cut statement to the effect that every sensitive theatergoer must by all means see it" may be "the least that one might expect" if one happens to be offering the play; but all my respect for the contributions which the Group has made in the past and will probably make in the future does not persuade me that I ought to make "a clear-cut statement" which I do not believe.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

Films

Groucho & Co.

IT is absurd to be serious about the Marx Brothers, as I intend to be. But it would be more absurd to try being funny about them. At their best they are absolute, and this means that "A Night at the Opera" (Capitol) is funny beyond the power of words to be funny. I think I have never seen an audience laugh so long and so hard. But it was not at words—not even at the words which George Kaufman and Morrie Ryskind had written for Groucho and Chico to say, and I do not forget that some of their puns were the best in years. It was at the three mad brothers themselves, Groucho and Chico and Harpo; at them and at the curious, cockeyed power with which they suddenly endowed all life. An energy was there at which one could do nothing but laugh. One could, I suppose, be terrified or bewildered; but that would be because one did not understand.

Understand what? It is absurd to say, since it cannot be said and since anyone not utterly dead knows what it is. Yet if a theory must be had, here one is. The genius of the Marx Brothers is for parody. They never are themselves. They exist too abundantly to be content with being that—they must go on, by the rapidest of transitions, to being something else. Groucho, in my opinion the bright star among the three, is never anything but the thing he is at the moment pretending to be. Resting one foot on a prostrate tenor, and noting that Chico at his side does likewise, he becomes a barfly and calls for two beers. He does not say: "Ha ha! we look like two fellows in a saloon. Let's talk like that." All at once he *is* talking like that—and in another moment is talking otherwise. For now as he draws a piece of paper out of his pocket he becomes an insurance agent; or as he rides up to the Opera House in an open coach he becomes an elegant and listless gentleman; or as he is wheeled on his great trunk along the passageways of an ocean liner he becomes a traveler through many countries—the staterooms the countries, and their doors his open ports. Set down at his door he instantly becomes what the first person who approaches him suggests to him that he be. He is the wrong thing to all men; and paradoxically enough, by being always this he keeps himself clear in our minds. We know who he is even if we do not know what he is or how to describe him. Like Falstaff he is master of many styles and slave to none. Falstaff is in turn a great lord, a busy general, a confessed coward, an old saint worn down by sighing, a friend abused, a forward liar, a wheedling penitent, a confident rake; nor does such a list exhaust him. He is everything except himself, and at the same time he is the most rigorously defined character in all drama. He is defined by that excess of life in him which makes him delight so endlessly in being others.

Groucho is something like that, and so is Harpo—who knows only the styles of pantomime, since he is mute, but who for an instance provides the great moment of the picture when he becomes an acrobat. The mere sight of the scenery ropes at the Metropolitan is enough; he starts swinging on them in vast curves which keep perfect time with the music of "Il Trovatore" as it rises from the orchestra pit and which keep time also with the ascent and descent of drops behind the tenor as he sings. This last is fitting, for Harpo and his brothers hate the tenor and wish to confound him. He is confounded; another tenor takes his tune; the love story comes out right; and so in one fine lyrical instant, one moment of pure motion toward which all the action of the piece has tended, Harpo swings and swings. Nor is there anything strange about the fact that he does. It is simply his last and best parody—the bit of pretending which absorbs all others, brings the work of art naturally and logically to its climax, and bestows upon it the seal of unity. The unity of "A Night at the Opera" is something which even these madmen have not achieved before. It is exciting and perfect; a sign that they have at last learned how to use every resource which Hollywood can offer them; and the simplest reason I can find for calling them funny beyond the power of words to spoil the fun.

MARK VAN DOREN

Erratum

In the issue of December 4 the price of "The Double Agent" by R. P. Blackmur was listed at $2. The correct price is $3.

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